ALBERTA FOLKLORE QUARTERLY

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Alberta Folklore Quarterly is published by the University of Alberta under the supervision of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project. The magazine aims to print authentic first hand accounts interpretative of the region and its people; to encourage the collection and preservation of the traditional materials of Alberta; and to help foster a literature indigenous to this part of the Canadian West.

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THE COVER

We borrowed our cover drawing for this issue from the Southern Alberta Pioneers' and Old-Timers Association. The drawing first appeared on the program of their 1944 annual roundup at the Palliser Hotel, Calgary. We were present at the roundup, enjoyed generous hospitality, and admired the program. We should probably mention that the Hudson's Bay Company, Calgary, originally furnished the cover cut to the Old Timers Association. Our thanks, then, to both the Old Timers and the Bay. Congratulations, too, to the "Honourable Company." May 2, 1945, was their 275th Anniversary.

THE COVER — 10 Feb copy

20 ins / 6 pt

Once again we present a cover design by Colin Low, Caldwell, Alberta. " The drawing, " writes Mr. Low, " suggests the Indian folk legend about the two lovers escaping from the wrath of the Thunder God."

Since Mr. Low comes from the general region of Old Chief Mountain, we suspect that his "Thunder God" is the same redoubtable " Old Man" or "Naphi" of the southern Alberta Indians, who lived on Old Chief and who, [illegible] in a fit of anger at his daughter and a northern chief, tossed a whole line of huge rocks after the fleeing pair.

We like the legend and we like the drawing. It would please us to see more Alberta artists base their work on Alberta tradition.

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HIGH WINDS

A tourist alighted from the train at Lethbridge and after having considerable difficulty in buttoning his overcoat with one hand while holding his hat on with the other he walked over to the shelter of the depot where he asked a farmer standing there: "I say, my good man, does it always blow like this here?"

"Well, no," he drawled, "it just blows like this for about a week and then it blows like hell!"

AN ALBERTA CORN-SHELLER

In Macleod they were preparing for an exhibition of field corn grown in Southern Alberta. Several hundred samples were all arranged on tables in a barn when one of the dust storms came up and everyone ran for shelter forgetting to shut the doors. When the storm was all over they found that the samples had been blown through a knothole in the back of the barn and shelled as they went through.

Then there was the calf which was held up against the barn by the wind until it starved to death.

ALBERTA'S MAIN INDUSTRY

The old lady in the East had just finished reading that it was so cold in Alberta that when the cattle laid down their tails froze to the ground and broke off when they got up.

"Well," she exclaimed, "this is the first time I have really understood why this extensive business of retailing cattle!"

OUR MOUNTAIN MENACE

There was that dreadful animal in the mountains known as the "Rack-a-Lou" with two legs on one side shorter than the two on the other side, so he could sun on the side hills. The way of escape when pursued by it was to run in the opposite direction; They couldn't turn around.

A CHAMPION JUMPER

From the Drumheller country comes this tale about a wondrous jumper. The tale concerns a cowpuncher of the pld days who was eager to take any gamble and would take any dare.

It appears that the cowpuncher bragged that he could jump farther than anyone else in the district, and although he had no takers he decided to prove his statement.

Everyone from miles around congregated at the spot on the appointed day. There wasn't anything unusual about the cowboy's dress other than that he wore rubber heels on his riding boots. Well sir, he jumped and he jumped so hard that he kept on bouncing for three solid days. At last the Mountie had to shoot him to save him from starving to death!

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO SWIM

Sapper W. J. Ockley, Royal Canadian Engineers, Calgary, sends us this little tale originated years ago by Malcom T. Millar, ex-member of the North West Mounted Police and old time rancher of the Millarville district-named after him.

Mr. Millar wandered into the bar of the old Alberta Hotel in Calgary one day to partake of a milkshake or some other cooling and refreshing drink, and he joined a group that was discussing notorious swimmers and their feats. After a while someone asked Mr. Millar how he was swimming.

" Well, " he replied, " I can't swim a stroke, but I'll tell you about an experience I had in Ontario before I came West. I was out in a boat on a lake about three miles from shore one day when a sudden squall hit me and dumped me into the water. I sank about twenty feet till I hit bottom, then I came up again. After I had done that a couple of times I decided that

the next time I went down I would grab a big stone to hold me down there. So I took a big breath, down I went, grabbed a big stone and started to walk. I walked and walked till I couldn't hold my breath any longer. I dropped the stone and straightened up, and I'll be dog-goned if I wasn't three miles up a creek!

BIG SKEETERS

The following yarn was supplied by G. N. Misener who related: " I was at Peace River Crossing in 1913-14 (Methodist Missionary and Secretary of the Peace River Board of Trade) and wish that I had been more conscious of the folklore material which could have been gathered. The Mosquitoes were very bad and there was a story which I suspect might have come from Ontario or Quebec.

A settler, in desperation from the attacks of swarms of mosquitoes, took refuge under a large potash kettle he kept in the yard for scalding hogs. The mosquitoes stung the outside of the kettle so violently that their beaks stuck right through. The man picked up a rock and riveted a number of the beaks on the inside of the kettle. It was unfortunate for him. Presently there was a whirring of wings and the kettle was lifted right off the man.

I can vouch for the savagery of those mosquitoes. It is quite true that many of them " weigh a pound!"

HE WAS COLD

Mr. James A. Hansen, Aetna, sends us this one: Mr. T., an old-timer of this district once went for a load of coal. He loaded up his coal and started for home. He hadn't traveled

very far before a blizzard sprang up. He got lost and finally the horses brought him back to the coal mine which he had left a few hours before. He was frozen so stiff he could hardly talk and bumped against the door of the house. They opened the door and a voice said: " He is frozen stiff!" They had just hauled a barrel of water from a spring, so they stripped off all of Mr. T!s clothes and ducked him in the barrel of water. Quick as a flash a thick ice formed on the barrel of water. He was certainly cold. He went home with his load of coal the next day.

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AS WE WERE SAYING

This is the final issue of the Alberta Folklore Quarterly to be submitted by your present editor. We are moving to the State of Wisconsin, leaving the Quarterly and the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project in capable hands.

We leave Western Canada with a good deal of regret. We like the Alberta folk and are beginning to think of ourselves as Albertans. In many ways Alberta seems like home. We believe it will always be like that.

We find some comfort in knowing that Albertans have pride in recognizing their own particular way of saying and doing; and we go with a distinct consciousness of faith that they will continue to preserve their traditions.

As a parting word we might remind you -- as Albertans -- that the lore of the countryside is roundabout. It is not a written literature; don't expect to find it in books. You may hear it in the whisper of the Alberta wind; hear it in the beat of the rain and the hail. You may see it in the vistas of the prairies and perhaps in the great hump of the Rocky Mountains. You will certainly see it in the faces of the people and hear it on their lips. Hear the tradition, then tell it again and let it live.

We are fond of saying that Bob Edwards did more to establish the folklore of the West than any other person. Bob, in his own way, was quite a collector. As proof we offer the following wonderful tall story attributed by Bob to the Alberta master story spinner, Dave McDougall. This tale was published in the Eye Opener.

"Did you ever hear?" began Dave McDougall, the Calgary old timer, "about the winter I put in on my ranch near Morley in '67? It was what a man might be excused for calling some winter. That is to say, it was cold.

"We began to notice unusual symptoms along in November. To begin with, the creeks all froze solid-clear to the bottom, you understand, and instead of water flowing along in the creek beds there was ice moving along at about the same speed. Regular glaciers.

"The creeks where I was emptied into the Bow and of course the Bow was as full as the creeks. So there was nothing else for the creek to do but to hump up when it reached the river and double back on itself. Then when it got to headquarters it had to double up again and go down to the river.

"All the creeks kept up this process until they were piled up on top of themselves four or five times or even more than that. Calgary folks looking west thought that the mountains were walking into town. They did, for a fact! We had to tunnel through those creeks to get from one place to another. And we had to keep making new tunnels too, as the old tunnels kept

moving up above our reach, where we couldn't get at them. You never saw anything like it, believe me!

"But the worse was yet to come. The first cold snap lasted until along in January. Then we had the usual January thaw. But this thaw hadn't got good and started when a big freeze set in one night and froze the ground so quick and so hard that it popped the rabbits and gophers out of their holes, the way a little boy might pop peas out of the pod. I tell you it was a corker!"

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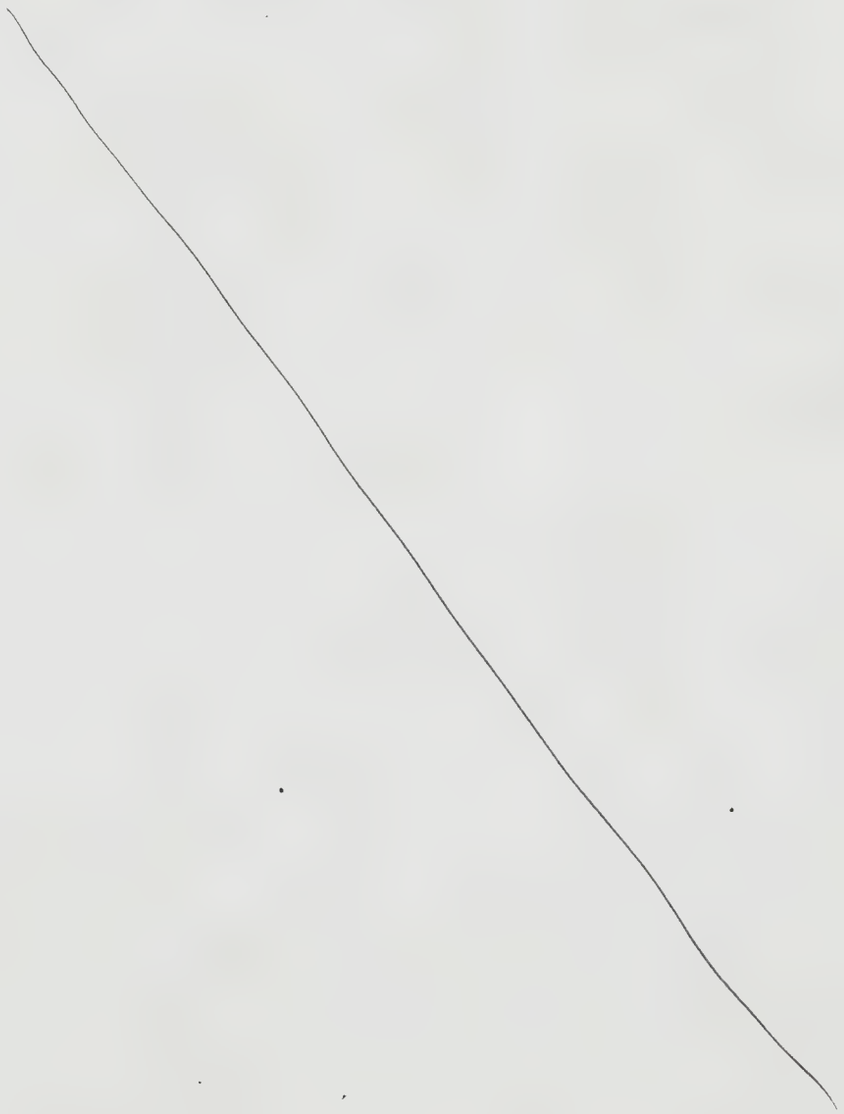
In this day when all our minds are turned toward the hope of a lasting International peace, let's remember that a great and true Internationalism may be strengthened by a knowledge of our local beliefs; that we may create within ourselves a body of tradition of which we are proud, and in which the rest of the world may find something to be proud of too.



~~AS WE WERE SAYING~~

~~a spoof of the~~ authentic wonders ~~folklorist~~

Following our custom of establishing ~~truth~~ a as a basis for Western exaggeration we present ~~this~~ yarn collected from M. B. Graham, of Calgary, by Lieutenant Herbert Halpert, U. S. A. A. F.:

> When Paul Bunyan built the Rocky Mountains, it was the winter of the blue snow when the geese flew backwards. He hauled the rock from Winnipeg with a big blue ox. He had a steam shovel; everytime it took out a scoop it gouged out a hole the size of Lake Louise.
>
> They made flapjacks on a large griddle. The griddle was so large that the KP, he'd have to skate up and down the griddle with greased feet -- butter his feet -- to get it greased.
>
> He had an engine that was so large that everytime the wheels made one revolution it was pay day. . .*

We can't vouch for Paul's ox or steam shovel or griddle, but we can for the colored snow. George C. Ruhle, Park Naturalist, Glacier National Park, writing about a Bunyan

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For the Halpert tales see: * ~~Paul Bunyan~~ Herbert Halpert, California Folklore Quarterly, Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan. 1945

yarn similar to the above, states:

> Among the fantastic tales woven about the Cyclopean, heroic Paul Bunyan, the story of the "winter of the Blue Snow" ranks as a favorite. On rare occasions in wintertime Glacier's east side, too, experiences an unusually tinted snowfall, a beautiful creamy-buff precipitation which melts into tawny-skinned snow masses in the sun's heat. Residents become amazed at the strange phenomenon and tell stories of wars presaged by falls of blood-red flakes; tales are recalled of the earth's "sweating blood" after a ruthless and gory battle. No pernament mystery is attached to Glacier's experience, however. A great dust storm raging in the Palouse country of the Idaho Panhandle will darken the atmosphere for hundreds of miles away. A coincident sonwstorm of the front ranges of the Rockies merely sweetens the dusty atmosphere, and becomes colored itself by so doing.

Wholly different from this externally colored snow is the "red snow" found at times on Glacier's summits in the summertime. Footprints across a snowbank are colored crimson; the field itself shows a light pink tinge. This coloration, like that of the famed blood-red snow fields of the arctic,

like the "red snowstorms" of tradition, like the red snow of the Cordilleras, Alps and other montane regions throughout the world, is due solely to the rapid multiplication of a microscopic, but brilliantly colored one-celled alga. To the botanist this simple plant is Protococcus nivalis (primordial, nival coccus; freely, snow-dwelling, primitive plant), as much at home in the snow field, and quite as removed from the power of prophesying ominous events as the fiery paintbrush of the Prairie or the scarley salvia of a quaint, old-fashioned garden.*

While stationed at Calgary Lt. Halpert heard some of the famous tales of the west. There is the yarn, for instance, often told to illustrate deceptive distances in Alberta. The story as given here was told to Lt. Halpert by Dr. B. J. Charles.

This Englishman was here visiting a cousin of his, and in the morning he got up and he thought he'd like to walk from Calgary to the Rocky Mountains -- they looked so close. (They're about eighty miles away.) He started at 9 o'clock and landed home at 5 o'clock very much played out. When he told his cousin what he had done, his cousin told him: "You must never do that again because you can't judge distance here -- the air is so rare."

The next day they were going for a little walk

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*See: Drivers' Manual, Glacier Park Transport Co., Glacier National Park, Montana, 1937.

together and they came to a little stream. The native Calgarian was going to step over it, but the visiting cousin took a look at it and started to take off his clothes. On being asked what he doing, he said, "I'm not going to take a chance on stepping over. It may be a lot wider than it looks due to the rarified air."

And certainly no less interesting than the deceptive distance of the West is this tale explaining how certain western creatures learned to hop. This one was told to Lt. Halpert by Alex R. McTavish.

There's a real lead in stories about the dry years in this country -- in the early '80's. There's been many stories told about them. It didn't rain for so long that the ground began to crack. And these were not ordinary cracks, but they kept getting wider until the whole country was just a network of cracks leaving little islands with large crevices between. It's said that the rabbits used to walk like ordinary animals, but in order to get from one island to another they had to hop and therefore acquired the habit of hopping. Some people say that's where the grasshopper learned to hop -- from jumping from one island to another. Prairie animals such as the antelope became very expert at it. In fact everything that traveled had to hop. Even the old-timers, who were very few in those days, did their share of hopping. Naturally they

acquired a hopping gait too, but this gait did not stay with them after normal weather conditions sealed up the cracks. But there are some of the real old-timers from the prairie region that still have a suspicious loping gait.

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Accounts by early travelers in the West often furnish some of the best yarns. Colonel P. A. Moore, of Banff, reminds us that this is true.

"The following account," he writes, "is taken from The North-West Passage by Land, by Viscount Milton and W. B. Cheadle, M.D. The Narrator is Chief Trader Hardisty who related this yarn to Milton and Cheadle some time in May, 1863. This story appealed to me, especially as it is, as far as I know, the first recorded instance of athletic training in the Great North West."

The locale of this yarn was old Fort Benton, Montana, the famous trading post on the Missouri. This should make the story especially interesting to Albertans, since Fort Benton was headquarters for most of the trading into Southern Alberta before the arrival of the railroad. The Fort Benton trail is one of the great historic roads of the Province.

Here's the story: "One day a solitary and adventurous Cree made his appearance at the Fort on foot. Shortly after his arrival, a body of mounted Blackfeet arrived, and discovering the presence of one of the hostile tribe, clamorously demanded that

he should be given up to them to be tortured and scalped. The trader in command of the fort was anxious to save the life of the Cree, yet afraid to refuse to surrender him, for the Blackfeet were numerous and well armed, and had been admitted within the stockade. After much discussion, a compromise was agreed to, the white man engaging to keep the Cree in safe custody for a month, at the end of which time the Blackfeet were to return to the Fort, and the prisoner was to be turned loose, with a hundred yards start of his pursuers, who were bound to chase him only on foot, and with no other arms but their knifes.

"The Blackfeet took their departure, and the Cree was immediately put into hard training. He was fed on fresh buffalo meat, as much as he could eat, and made to run around the Fort enclosure, at full speed, for an hour twice every day.

"At the expiration of the stipulated month, the Blackeet came to the Fort, according to their agreement. Their horses were secured within the walls, all their arms taken from them except their knives, and then the expected victim was escorted to the starting place by the whole staff of the establishment, who turned out on horseback to see fair play.

"The Cree was placed at his post, 100 yards ahead of his blood thirsty enemies, who were eager as wolves for their prey. The word was given, and away darted the hunted Indian, the pursuers following with frantic yells. At first the pack of Blackfeet gained rapidly, for terror seemed to paralyse the limbs of the unfortunate Cree, and his escape seemed hopeless. But as his enemies came within a few yards of him, he recovered his presence

of mind, shook himself together, his training and fine condition began to tell, and, to their astonishment and chagrin, he left them with ease at every stride. In another mile he was far in advance, and pulling up for an instant, shook his fist triumphantly at his baffled pursuers, and then quickly ran out of sight!"

As far as Hardisty knows he is still going!

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A slightly different type of race that occurred at Medicine Hat and involved a famous western strong man is recounted by George Shepherd, of West Plains, Saskatchewan. The story is about Fightin' Joe Wylie and was told to Mr. Shepherd by Gabriel Lavallie, aged Metis of the Cypress Hills. This is the yarn just as Mr. Shepherd worte it down:

"It was somewhere about 1884 that I was in Medicine Hat and first met Joe Wylie. It was on a Sunday afternoon and about the only thing to do in those days on Sunday was to get drunk, fight, or go horse racing. This Sunday there was a big crowd out on the race track, which was a flat place up on the river bank south of town. There was a big fellow up there named Ed Rowe selling whisky at 50 cents a cup.

"There was also a big guy up there named Jack Boudoin riding a big heavy horse with a large Mexican saddle and taperderas. And there was this big Englishman, Fightin' Joe Wylie, who must have been about six feet four inches in height, riding a large black horse that he called Nigger.

"A bunch of Frenchmen, lumberhacks from the east, had just blown into the Hat from Calgary and, as I was holding Mr. Wylie's horse at the time, they suggested that I race with Boudoin for stakes of $25 a side with Wylie to hold the stakes. They were talking among themselves in French, and saying that if they won they would get the money, and that if they lost they would take the stakes away from Mr. Wylie anyway. They asked me if I could talk French, which I could, but I told them that I could only talk a little Spanish, so they talked very freely among themselves. I told Mr. Wylie of their plans and he gave a short laugh and said, 'All right, let them try it out.'

"Well, we ran the race and I won. At this the Frenchmen came running up to Joe to say that it had been a foul start and that they wanted all the money. Wylie was waiting for them and, peeling off his coat, gave it to me, telling me to start off for town on his horse and that he would follow on foot. Just then the big Frenchman, who was the leader of the gang, came running at Mr. Wylie. I did not exactly see what happened, but I saw the big Englishman sort of stick out his leg and trip and hit the Frenchman, who rolled over a couple of times and then lay very still on the grass.

"Joe was on the run by this time, following me up, and every time a Frenchman would catch up to him he would stick out his leg, hit him and leave him piled in a heap. Joe, being a professional football player, seemed to know just how to trip and hit them. He must have downed three or four of them but finally three of them caught up to him. At this Joe just turned about and faced them and all you could see was flying legs and arms and all you

could hear was French cuss words and good old English oaths. But Joe downed them all and jogged along on foot into town. I never saw such a man to fight. He really seemed to enjoy it.

"The next day Mr. Wylie met me in the bar and gave me a few drinks and also the $25. Mr. Wylie's arms were black and blue where those Frenchmen had clawed the shirt sleeves off him, but the Frenchmen I saw around town later looked a whole lot worse. The last time I saw Fightin' Joe Wylie, just before he died, he was pretty ill and said, 'Well, Gabe, I don't suppose we'll ever run horses at Medicine Hat again.'"*

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Lawyers and judges usually furnish their share of good humor, and we have been impressed by the innumerable tales about the famous Calgary lawyer, Paddy Nolan. Mr. J. D. Higinbotham, once of ~~Macleod,~~ Lethbridge and author of the highly readable Alberta book, When the West was Young, sends us a good Nolan story.

"Once upon a time a lady from Medicine Hat was committed for trial charged with selling lottery tickets. She was raffling a piano, and sold tickets at one dollar each. Since Paddy Nolan was known throughout the West as a valiant defender, the lady went to Calgary to secure his legal services. Paddy asked her uf she had any of the 'pasteboards' left, to which she replied, 'Yes.' He then

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See: Regina Leader, Regina, Saskatchewan.

described to her the situation of a large stone building on 7th Avenue West (the Court House), and said, 'You go in and take the second door to the left and you will find a kindly old gentleman there who will buy a ticket.'

"She went as directed, found the 'kindly old gentleman -- none other than Mr. Justice Scott -- and, being a personable and comely woman, made a sale.

"On the eve of the trial, Paddy and Judge Scott were on the same train enroute to Medicine Hat. Paddy twitted the Judge about taking part in illegal raffles. When the case was called Paddy pleaded guilty for his client, then addressed the Court in her behalf: 'It is a well known principle of law that an accomplice is guilty the same as the principal. The person who buys a raffle ticket is equally culpable with the person who sells. Is there any reason why one should be punished, and the other allowed to go Scott free? ' The Judge's upper lip was twitching during the eloquent and impassioned speech. He gave a hasty 'Sentence suspended' and, evidently, gave deep though to what he would say to Paddy afterwards."

Paddy Nolan was born in Limerick, south Ireland, St. Patrick's Day, 1864. He was christmed "Patrick James" but was usually known as "Paddy". He died February 11, 1913, in his 49th year.

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Alberta has had its share of interesting and amusing rascals. We recall with pleasure the tales about Dave Cochrane, the master trickster of Southern Alberta, and those about Hack Dubois, the

Robin Hood of the Stettler country. We have been interested, too, in discovering yarns about the foremost trickster and humorist of the Peace River Country, Badly Red.

We asked Norman Soars, of Peace River, to send down a few good Baldy Red tales. Here's what Mr. Soars replied:

"One remembers Baldy best for his sense of humor. He dearly loved to joke and it didn't matter much whether the joke was on him or on his old enemies, the Police.

"A typical story is told of Baldy in Peace River. Major 'Blackjack' Macdonell was police officer and Justice of the Peace. One day Baldy called in at the Hudson's Bay Store and suggested to the Manager, Johnny Sutherland, that he might lend him two hundred dollars. 'I've got to meet the Major this afternoon and he's apt to soak me a couple of hundred,' Baldy explained. Johnny who was (and still is) a canny Scotchman, knew Baldy of old and said that he thought he could manage it, but when would he be paid? 'On the first of June,' Baldy said, and when he said the first of June, he meant just that -- neither sooner nor later.

"That afternoon Baldy sat, fidgeting in the guard room at the barracks. Presently Major Macdonell came in and, taking off his coat, remarked, 'Well, Baldy, what brought you here?'

"'Two policemen, Major,' said Baldy.

"'Huh, drunk, I suppose?' said the Major.

"'Yes, both of them,' replied Baldy.

" Needless to say he needed the two hundred and repaid the loan on the due date.

"Another story Baldy like to tell was of the time he pulled up with his load of moonshine in front of the Police Barracks and, walking boldly in, asked the N.C.O. in charge to keep an eye on his wagon overnight. 'I've a load of Government stuff -- dynamite and caps and all, and there're so many damn crooks in the country, I daren't leave it.' So the police watched his load of bootleg liquor all night and Baldy had a new story to tell of his prowess.

"Or, that's the story Baldy told!

"Another time, driving into Peace River, he camped overnight at Crooked Bridge. Noticing some clipped straws on the ground, Baldy searched around until he found a cache of whisky under the creek bank. That was fine, but the cream of the joke for Baldy was when, having washed the labels off, he sold the liquor in Peace River to the very bootlegger who had hidden it there. Baldy was proud of his reputation as a bootlegger and humorist, and of his varied exploits.

"He told me once that he went overseas in the First World War. 'Yes,' he said, 'I went over with a shipload of horses, and got up to London. And, by God, when I walked down Piccadilly, every second man on the street hollered out, "Hey, Baldy, how the hell did you get over here!"'

"The story has often been told of how, when Baldy was charged with stealing a cow, he maintained that all he knew about it was that he saw a piece of rope lying in the road and threw it into

the back of his wagon. 'How was I to know that there was a cow at the end of it?' Baldy would say.

"Another exploit that Baldy liked to tell about was when, at Grouard, a fox buyer rented a stall from him in his barn to keep a pair of live silver foxes. The foxes dug their way out, but Baldy was not responsible for that. Later when, as semi-domesticated foxes will, they returned to their quarters, Baldy shut off their escape route, and, after a decent interval, sold them to their former owner.

"But Baldy never enjoyed any greater joke than when he slid a case of whisky under the voluminous skirts of the two Grey Nuns, riding in the spring-seat of his wagon as he drove up the Grand Trunk line.

"Baldy's right name was George Yeoman -- he came west from his home in Ontario as a boy, and spent most of his life freighting, first in souther Alberta, later on the Grand Trunk and later still, in the Peace River Country. He died a few years ago at Hythe, west of Grande Prairie -- honestly lamented by all who knew him (except perhaps a few of his victims). He got his name from the fringe of sandy hair around his bald head. He and his old antagonists, the Mounted Police of the old days, are gone,and we will never see their like again."

. . . . . .

Another type of trickster is the mischievous spirit of the Northern Indians known as Wah-Sak-O-Jak. This spirit is able to assume the shape of any or all the animals. This gift, of course, makes him a master prankster.

One time Wah-Sak-O-Jak was out hunting with Muskwa, the bear. They had been hunting for days and so unsuccessfully that they were beginning to eye each other suspiciously. Finally Wah-Sak-O-Jak began to rub the juice of wild cranberries into his eyes. He explained to the bear that the juice made his eyes bright and keen. The bear tried it and was temporarily blinded; whereupon Wah-Sak-O-Jak grabbed his tomahawk, whacked him over the head, skinned and ate him.

When Wah-Sak-O-Jak had finished his meal his stomach was greatly distended, so he went to a birch tree that was growing with a double trunk. He squeezed in between the two trunks and commanded the tree to close up and press his stomach back to normal. The tree, however, closed so tightly that Wah-Sak-O-Jak was held prisoner until he grew so thin that he was able to squeeze out.

Wah-Sak-O-Jak was terribly angry. He went and got a long switch and gave that tree a vicious beating. You can still see the marks of the beating on the trunk of any birch tree.

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With this issue we present one of the foremost Alberta old-timers, Norman Macleod, of Lethbridge. Norman came to old Fort Macleod in 1880 and is thereby well qualified to relate early happenings in and around that historic spot. Incidentally, he has been one of the staunchest friends of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project, writing us numerous letters relating to the history and romance of Southern Alberta. Last year he won our old-timer's contest by sending in a remarkable set of reminescences.

We also take pleasure, ~~too,~~ in submitting an article by another old-timer, Mr. Z. M. Hamilton, known far and wide across the West as Zack. Among his other exploits, Zack Hamilton edited the Calgary Herald in 1901, about the time that Bob Edwards, Paddy Nolan, and R. B. Bennett were all taking a hand in the writing. At present, Zack is Secretary of the Saskatchewan Historical Society, and has done a splendid collecting job for that Province.

Dan McCowan, of Banff, widely known natural ~~historian~~ and wild life authority, writes about early natural history in the North West. ~~For his article Mr. McCown has depended on his excellent library of Western Canadiana.~~ The article demonstrates ~~how well~~ that Dan knows his ~~books~~ Western Canadiana.

This issue presents, too, W. Everard Edmonds, member of our Editorial Board, local historian, parson, and teacher.

He has written a great deal about the West, and one of his most recent pieces of writing is an interesting booklet called: Edmonton Past and Present.

Finally we note C. Frank Steele, City Editor of the Lethbridge Herald, author of many magazine articles, and an interested historian of Southern Alberta.

Printer: This for inside of back cover

24 x 10

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By
Gwen Pharis Ringwood

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55 short stories, 44 Alberta background essays and 32 poems in the boys' division and 56 poems in the girls' division were submitted.

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We are glad that Hatfield went to Medicine Hat, for not only did the rains fall but we, some 24 years later, got a good idea for an Alberta play. " What, " we said to ourself," could be more fitting as an Alberta hero than a rainmaker...." So we are now hard at work completing " Hatfield"....the second

of the three plays we have contracted to write for the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project.

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HIGH WINDS

A tourist alighted from the train at Lethbridge and after having considerable difficulty in buttoning his overcoat with one hand while holding his hat on with the other he walked over to the shelter of the depot where he asked a farmer standing there: "I say, my good man, does it always blow like this here?"

"Well, no," he drawled, "it just blows like this for about a week and then it blows like hell!"

AN ALBERTA CORN-SHELLER

In Macleod they were preparing for an exhibition of field-corn grown in Southern Alberta. Several hundred samples were all arranged on tables in a barn when one of the dust storms came up and everyone ran for shelter forgetting to shut the doors. When the storm was all over they found that the samples had been blown through a knothole in the back of the barn and shelled as they went through.

Then there was the calf which was held up against the barn by the wind until it starved to death.

ALBERTA'S MAIN INDUSTRY

The old lady in the East had just finished reading that it was so cold in Alberta that when the cattle laid down their tails froze to the ground and broke off when they got up.

"Well," she exclaimed, "this is the first time I have really understood by this extensive business of retailing cattle!"

OUR MOUNTAIN MENACE

Thre was that dreadful animal in the mountains known as the "Rack-a-Lou" with two legs on one side shorter than the two on the other side, so he could sun on the side hills. The way of escape when pursued by it was to run in the opposite direction; they couldn't turn around.

A CHAMPION JUMPER

From the Drumheller country comes this tale about a wondrous jumper. The tale concerns a cowpuncher of the old days who was eager to take any gamble and would take any dare.

It appears that the cowpuncher bragged that he could jump farther than anyone else in the district, and although he had no takers he decided to prove his statement.

Everyone from miles around congregated at the spot on the appointed day. There wasn't anything unusual about the cowboy's dress other than that he wore rubber heels on his riding boots. Well sir, he jumped and he jumped so hard that he kept on bouncing for three solid days. At last the Mountie had to shoot him to save him from starving to death!

HE DIDN'T HAVE TO SWIM

Sapper W. J. Ockley, Royal Canadian Engineers, Calgary, sends us this little tale originated years ago by Malcolm T. Millar, ex-member of the North West Mounted Police and old-time rancher of the Millarville districthamed after him.

Mr. Millar wandered into the bar of the old Alberta Hotel in Calgary one day to partake of a milkshake or some other cooling and refreshing drink, and he joined a group that was discussing notorious swimmers and their feats. After a while someone asked Mr. Millar how he was swimming.

"Well," he replied, "I can't swim a stroke, but I'll tell you about an experience I had in Ontario before I came West. I was out in a boat on a lake about three miles from shore one day when a suddn squall hit me and dumped me into the water. I sank about twenty feet till I hit bottom, then I came up again. After I had done that a couple of times I decided that the next time I went down I would grab a big stone to hold me down there. So I took a big breath, down I went, grabbed a big stone and started to walk. I walked and walked till I couldn't hold my breath any longer. I dropped the stone and straightened up, and I'll be dog-goned if I wasn't three miles up a creek!"

BIG SKEETERS

The following yarn was supplied by G. N. Misener who relates: "I was at Peace River Crossing in 1913-14 (Methodist Missionary and Secretary of the Peace River Board of Trade) and wish that I had been more conscious of the folklore material which could have been gathered. Th mosquitoes were very bad and there was a story which I suspect might have come from Ontario or Quebec.

A settler, in desperation from the attacks of swarms of mosquitoes, took refuge under a large potash kettle he kept in the yard for scalding hogs. The mosquitoes stung the outside of the kettle so violently that their beaks stuck right through. The man picked up a rock and riveted a number of the beaks on the inside of the kettle. It was unfortunate for him. Presently there was a whirring of wings and the kettle was lifted right off the man."

I can vouch for the savagery of those mosquitoes. It is quite true that many of them weigh a pound!"

HE WAS COLD

Mr. James A. Hansen, Aetna, sends us this one: Mr. T., an old-timer of this district once went for a load of coal. He loaded up his coal and started for home. He hadn't traveled very far before a blizzard sprang up. He got lost and finally the horses brought him back to the coal mine which he had left a few hours before. He was frozen so stiff he could hardly talk and bumped against the door of the house. They opened the door and a voice said: "He is frozen stiff!" They had just hauled a barrel of water from a spring, so they stripped off all of Mr. T.'s clothes and ducked him in the barrel of water. Quick as a flash a thick ice formed on the barrel of water. He was certainly cold. He went home with his load of coal the next day.

THE COVER

Once again we present a cover design by Colin Low, Caldwell, Alberta. "The drawing," writes Mr. Low, "suggests the Indian folk legend about the two lovers escaping from the wrath of the Thunder God."

Since Mr. Low comes from the general region of Old Chief Mountain, we suspect that his "Thunder God" is the same redoubtable "Old Man" or "Naphi" of the southern Alberta Indians, who lived on Old Chief and who, in a fit of anger at his daughter and a northern chief, tossed a whole line of huge rocks after the fleeing pair.

We like th legend and we like the drawing. It would please us to see more Alberta artists base their work on Alberta tradition.

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Alberta Folklore Quarterly is published by the University of Alberta under the provision of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project. The magazine aims to print authentic first hand accounts interpretative of the region and its people; to encourage the collection and preservation of the traditional materials of Alberta; and to help foster a literature indigenous to this part of the Canadian West.

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Robert E. Gard

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The Last Battle ..... G. A. Kennedy
The Mountain That Fell ..... Frank Steele
Alberta Writers ..... Gwen Pharis Ringwood

fight became a butchery. The Crees plunged into the current, and moved across almost in a solid mass, while the Blackfeet halted on the brink and shot them down like sheep. To use Jerry Potts' expression: "you could fire with your eyes shut and be sure to kill a Cree." The scene now, and during the charge, must have been one not easily forgotten. The river valley was filled with dust and smoke, the air resounded with the report of rifles and the deafening war cries of the Blackfeet, while thick and fast came the death yells of the Crees.

The slaughter did not end at the river. The Blackfeet followed the Crees across, and being joined by a large contingent of their brethren, who had crossed higher up, the butchery went on, and on one spot where the Crees made a sort of stand, about fifty of them were killed. It is a matter of fact that in the confusion and excitement of the pursuit, some of the Blackfeet were killed by their own friends, while Crees, mingling with the Blackfeet, escaped. Finally the Crees reached a clump of trees immediately in front of the present entrance of the Galt mine (the residence of Mr. E. T. Galt, general manager of the Alberta Railway and Coal Company, now stands on this spot), and having abandoned most of their horses, took refuge there, and made a last stand. The Blackfeet collected all the horses and virtually surrounded the place.

Such was the great battle of the fall of '70. Cairns of stones along the edge of the ravines mark to this day the place where the Blackfeet braves fell. It is difficult to estimate the loss of the Crees, on account of so many having been killed in the river and their bodies swept away by the current, but it is certain that it was between two and three hundred. About forty Blackfeet were killed and fifty wounded.

The following year the Crees sent tobacco to the Blackfeet and in the fall a formal treaty of peace was made between the two nations on the Red Deer River.

THE MOUNTAIN That Fell

By

C. Frank Steele

Dawn was breaking cold and clear over the mountains. The Pass, wrapped in sleep, was still and shadowy as it awaited the new day already heralded by the softly reddening sky far to the east.

Nestled at the foot of towering Turtle Mountain lay the tiny coal mining town of Frank, one of the earliest settlements in the Crow's Nest Pass, at that time entering on its first boom days.

The villagers were sleeping. At the mine two men stood on the tipple while far below in the workings beneath the mountain other workmen were busy at the coal face. In the Canadian Pacific yards the work for the night had just been cleaned up, and the train crew employed in the yards and the night operator in the little, dimly lighted station were the only ones about.

To be exact it was nearing 4 o'clock on the morning of April 29, 1903. The folk in the town had been enjoying the first bit of spring warmth of the year, and life was pleasant in the busy little camp. There had been plenty of work, money was circulating freely, and Frank was bound to grow—nothing could hold it back. That is what the businessmen said. Coal spelled power and here it was, a mountain of it.

The hands of the clock at the C.P.R. station pointed to four. And at that moment the whole region was shaken by a mysterious noise like that of thunder as the top of Turtle Mountain gave way.

Something awful had happened. The train crew knew it; the night operator knew it. This was no ordinary explosion—no "bump". It might be an earthquake or it might be a slide.

It was just that—a slide. Hurtling down the mountainside 3,000 feet came this tidal wave of rock. It swept away part of the village in the twinkling of an eye and snuffed out the lives of perhaps 85 persons. The exact number of the dead in this greatest rock slide in the history of Canada, and one of the greatest in the annals of the world, will never be known. That secret is locked in that hundred million tons of limestone and earth covering a thousand acres and standing in places a hundred feet deep.

Death came to those villagers of Frank without warning. They had no chance. There had been stories, now these are legends. There had been strange happenings in the Frank mine: breaking of timbers in the entry, wierd rumblings and crackings, squeezing in of walls. It was all very mysterious and uncanny and has become talk in the village.

Then came the fateful morning. This time the strange rumblings were followed by a terrifying roar, a shaking of the earth, a crushing of timbers on a scale hitherto unkown. Deep in the bowels of the earth the miners were "frozen" as they listened and waited.

They suspected an explosion and dread of the death-dealing after-damp, perhaps fire, seized them. But like real pitmen they soon pulled themselves together, this crew of 17 workers, and they began the long trek up the slope to the entrance. The way was clear until they reached a point a hundred feet from the top. They could go no farther. There their path was blocked by a wall of rock.

Their plight grew desperate. Then one of the wiser ones thought of the air shaft. "Let's try the air shaft," he counseled.

They did. But again they were thwarted by a wall of rubble. Then it was that they decided to literally dig their way out. It was a gamble but it might work, and they refused to be licked. For twelve hours they toiled and suffered, but they were eventually rewarded by breaking through the outcropping coal on the mountainside into the sunlight.

Their gameness had won them life and freedom, but what a spectacle of desolation greeted their eyes! Their beautiful valley, just touched by the magic of spring, was defaced, the mine entrance and tipple swept away, part of the village entombed and many loved ones dead. The horrible aftermath of what they had heard and seen deep in the mine lay before them. It was too much. Some broke down and wept under their overwhelming sorrow.

Few in the path of that falling mountain escaped. And few on the outer edges of the slide were rescued alive. It was an instance indeed of "one being taken and the other left." One miner's cottage on the fringe of the avalanche was found to contain six dead and three living. Alex Leitch, his wife and four children were dead; three other children, one a baby, were alive, and amazingly to add, unharmed.

Miracles? Yes, there were many that fateful morning at Frank. Take the case of the Sam Ennis family. Sam and his wife and their four children were fast asleep when the slide occurred. Their house was in a row of cottages caught and crushed like matchwood. Sam awoke to find himself partially pinned under the timbers of his home. He managed to free himself and his thoughts were with his wife and kiddies back there somewhere, he knew not where. He found them somewhere in that dread blackness, three together, and extricated them from their prison. One-year-old Gladys was missing. Mrs. Ennis groped about for her baby and soon touched the tiny body lying in soft mud and slime. It appeared to be dead, but wrapping it up in a blanket, she stumbled out into the open and over the rocks to a house that showed a speck of light in the darkness. In the warm cottage she found to her joy that her baby was still alive. All this Mrs. Ennis did—this rescue of her baby—despite a broken shoulder blade.

Many act of heroism were enacted that morning when Turtle Mountain collapsed. Survivors tell of the cool heroism of a C.P.R. operator and of Sid Choquette, the brakeman, who braved the sea of debris and dust and managed to get beyond the avalanche in time to flag the westbound passenger train and prevented a second disaster. The full story of this remarkable feat has never been told. This historians have overlooked it, but the old-timers remember.

That picturesque Pass pioneer, "Cap" Beebe, of Blairmore, recalled the slide a few years ago. Said he, "I remember it as if it happened yesterday. I was awakened by a most terrific noise and vibrations. I thought at first it was thunder. I lay still waiting for further crashes and for rain, but none came and I again fell asleep.

"Later I was awakened by a loud at my door. Getting up I found Felix Montlbetti, the section foreman, standing there greatly excited. 'It's gone!' he gasped.

"'What's gone?' I asked.

"'The town of Frank!'

"'The town of Frank?' I repeated mystified. 'Was there an explosion; was it blown up?'

"'No,' he replied. 'The mountain fell on it!'

"That was the terrible noise I had heard. I hurriedly dressed and accompanied Felix down to Frank. What a sight greeted us! I shall never forget it. It was more than an hour after the slide but rocks were still rumbling and falling down the sides of the mountain and continued to do so for days. There was no such thing as relatives searching for their missing kinfolk—they were buried beyond recovery."

The first word flashed to the outside world from the scene of the horror read like this: "An earthquake has happened . . . immediately afterwards what appeared to be a volcanic eruption took place at the top of Turtle Mountain which overlooks the town, throwing millions of tons of rock out . . . "

What caused the slide? This is what a geological report says: "The slide was due, not to a single cause, but to a combination of causes, among which the opening up of large chambers in the mine, situated under the base of the mountain, may have been a contributory cause." Today huge fissures may be seen atop Turtle Mountain, warning of possible future disturbances.

Another point of interest in seeking the cause of the appalling disaster is the fact that an earthquake occurred in the region in 1901. It was slight but it may have done its work in weakening that vast body of limestone overthrust on shale, sandstone, and coal.

Just how the mountain got its name is not known, although oldtimers used to say it was called Turtle Mountain because it moved slowly like a turtle. Be that as it may, it moved far from slowly the morning of April 29, 1903.

There is an interesting sidelight on Turtle Mountain and the region roundabout. This throws some light on how the valley received its name—the Crow's Nest Pass. According to the story as told by the Indians—they were the warlike Blackfeet—a great battle was fought there under the shadow of Turtle Mountain. The rivals were the Blackfeet and the Crows from Montana territory. That was back in the 1850's. The Crows had been making horse-stealing raids into Canada, and eventually the Bloods and Peigans set out to fight it out with the invaders. A fierce battle ensued in which the Crows were all killed. The Blackfoot Nation was complete master, and thereafter the area, where the Crows had made their hideout, was called the "Crow's Nest" by the Indians.

There appears to be good grounds for this tale. Indian chiefs who took part in the battle, one of the most decisive in that era just prior to the coming of the white men, vouch for it. And there it was, this old Indian battlefield, buried by the vast flood of rock that formed the Frank Slide.

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Gwen Pharis Ringwood

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almost impossible to obtain and we made arrangements with our Chinese laundryman to hire his cousin, or nephew, or some relative recently arrived from the Orient. He brought the lad to the house one evening while we were sitting on the veranda with Smoker lying along side, and we made a deal for the young fellow's services.

The Chinaman admired the dog, bent and patted his head and said, "Good Doggie, Good Doggie"—an attention that Smoker did not seem to resent. We gave the Chinaman the key to the back door and gave him instructions about preparing breakfast in the morning, and my wife said, "Before you come in be sure and speak to the dog."

The Chinaman said, "All right, I like nice doggie."

But the Oriental forgot these instructions, and we were awakened about 7 o'clock the following morning by the most fearful noise. When I got to the back door, I found the Chinaman scaling at great speed a picket fence that separated our property from some school grounds, and the dog in the act of tearing to pieces the somewhat voluminous garments of the fugitive. By the time I had Smoker under control, the Chinaman disappeared. Like the wayfarer in John Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" we saw him no more.

A few days elapsed and my wife was still in poor health. We looked around for some other domestic help and the only thing we could find was another Chinaman. My brother at that time was staying with us and, when the second Chinaman was to arrive in the morning, he undertook to get up, let the Chinaman in, and introduce him to the dog. Again there was another fearful commotion. We found my brother chaining Smoker up and the Chinaman sitting weeping in the kitchen. He was bleeding like a blood donor and reiterating plaintively, "The dog he bit me. The dog he bit me."

We had to take the second Chinaman to the hospital and bear the expenses of his treatment. We considered ourselves lucky for not being sued for damages.

My wife said to me, "If you don't do something about that made motions toward the army dog, I will shoot him myself." She rifle that I had by virtue of my service in the C.M.R.

I chained him up for the day but when I came home after a hard day's work Smoker was still a bone of contention between my wife and myself. It began to seem that my domestic felicity was being greatly impaired.

However, we were visited that night by a friend named Crofton, a sporting Irishman who had a ranch near Shepherd and professed to be an authority upon horses and dogs. He suggested that he should take Smoker out to the ranch where he would be able to run off some of his superfluous energy chasing wolves and other such things. We readily agreed to the plan. Crofton had a stable in town and he said he would chain up the dog there until he went out to the ranch in a couple of days. So that night I went down with him and chained him up in one of Crofton's stalls. He seemed to be quite docile.

We had been planning a short holiday at Banff for some weeks but we had not be able to make it, because we could neither take Smoker with us nor leave him at home, and now that our minds were free of him we decided to proceed to Banff.

We had a good time, fished for trout in the Echo River, and were enjoying ourselves immensely when we received a telegram from Crofton marked "urgent".

It said: "For God's sake come home. Smoker is loose in stable and horse has not been fed for days."

We sadly returned to Calgary and on going to Crofton's stable, the dog greeted us with every demonstration of affection.

By this time my wife was beginning to lose her patience. She blamed me for the loss of the of the dog, and all the trouble that the dog had got us into.

She told me the following morning that she was going to "get on the tub" herself to take care of an accumulated washing. She was not sufficiently recovered from her illness to undertake a job of that nature, and of course I was worried. The following morning I got up very early and went over to the Langevin Bridge near where there was a small foreign settlement springing up across the Bow River. I hoped to intercept a scrub woman on her way to work and bribe her to come and work for us for the day.

Presently a splendid looking creature dressed in foreign looking raiment came walking across the bridge. She was of large and ample proportions and among other adornment wore a magnificent amber necklace. She had not much English and I said, "You go to work?"

"Yes."

I said, "I will give you two dollars to come with me." She shook her head, "Not enough."

I "sweetened the pot" with another dollar but she shook her head, but when in desperation I added another dollar and showed her the money she said, "All right, I go with you."

I conducted her to the house and found that my wife had already started washing. She looked at the woman I had brought with some astonishment and said, "What on earth have you got there?"

I said, "I have brought a work lady for you."

As soon as the woman saw my wife she shied away from the door and said, "You no want me; you have another woman." She showed signs of distaste.

My wife said to me, "Have you paid her?"

I said, "Yes."

She then turned to the woman who said, "I no wash, I no scrub, I no work."

By this time I had propelled her into the house, and my wife showed her the tubs. She viewed the pile of dirty clothes with a great deal of aversion.

"All right," said my wife, "if you have never worked before you are going to do it now. Remove some of those gaudy clothes and get busy and earn the money."

When I left for the office leading Smoker, she was up to her elbows in soap suds.

I did my work at the *Herald* usually seated at a large desk with an aperture beneath it, into which I projected Smoker, and when he attempted to come out I would give him a poke with my feet. I took him back at lunch time, and the day passed in a fairly uneventful manner.

When 5 o'clock came and the paper was on the press there was usually a period of relaxation when Calgary citizens would come into the office and discuss the news of the day. When everything was all set I relaxed somewhat and, filling my pipe, walked into the outer office to join the people there, forgetting for the moment all about Smoker.

Among those present was W. H. Heald, a well-known Calgary sportsman, accompanied by a beautiful Irish setter that was the very apple of his eye. There was a sort of desultory conversation going on when I heard Heald say, "Merciful Heaven, where did that great savage brute come from?"

There was Smoker coming in the door with the hackles on his neck standing up and with his eyes upon Heald's setter. Before anybody could say a word he threw himself upon the setter and instantly there was pandemonium. The crowd scattered, some of them taking refuge on tables or desks, and one old gentleman tried to climb up the door. A bookcase fell down and there was a most fearful racket. Out of the din I could hear Heald's voice say, "If your dog kills mine, I will shoot you, so help me Heaven!"

Into the midst of this tumult came George Hope Johnstone, a tall athletic Scotchman who had been Colonel Sam Steele's assistant on the Beaver during the wild days of the C.P.R. construction in the mountains. He picked up, as if it had been a feather, a large office chair and swinging it around his head put Smoker out of business. Instantly there was an awed silence. Smoker lay stretched out as if dead. An elderly gentleman, who had perched himself on a shelf, came down, and for a moment nobody said a word. Heald picked up his setter, which was more frightened than hurt, and went out of the door abusing me in a very shameful manner and declaring that if it had not been for George Hope Johnstone he would have shot me for being in possession of such a dangerous brute.

We all looked at Smoker's body nearly filling one-half the space in the office, and Mr. Tomlinson, the business manager in the office, said, "Well I guess that is the end of your troubles with that dog, but you had better remove his carcass from here."

With the assistance of Mr. Johnstone, I dragged him into my own office where he lay apparently as bereft of life as the dead in Deuteronomy.

Just then I heard the *Herald* presses start, and in a few minutes the newsboys came bolting out to get their newspapers on the street. The first boy out stumbled over Smoker's form. Suddenly, the dog came back to life. He leapt upon the boy who fled screaming into the street and Smoker proceeded to tear the papers left behind into shreds. In a few minutes he seemed to be as well as ever and as ready for battle and trouble.

Very discouraged, I snapped the chain into his collar and proceeded to lead him home. At the Alberta corner I met Captain Grant Gordon who stopped and addressed me.

"By Jove," he said, "that is a magnificent looking hound you

have there."

"Yes," I replied, "he is a dog of great mettle and many accomplishments."

"Do you think he could kill wolves?" said the Captain.

"Just show him a wolf," I answered.

"You know," he said, "I have been bothered with wolves on my range for a long time."

Then he continued, hesitatingly because he was one of the most polite men in the world, "I suppose you would not loan him to me."

I brightened with hope and said, "Well, Captain Gordon, I would not let anybody else have him but seeing that it is you and that these wolves are bothering you so badly, I will let you have him."

"Oh, that is so good of you," said the Captain.

I ventured to ask him when he was returning to his ranch. He replied, "I am just going to Johnny Hamilton's livery stable to hitch up."

I said, "I will go with you and you can take the dog right along."

When his team was hitched up I chained Smoker to the hind axle, after receiving profound thanks from Captain Gordon. I had a qualm of conscience and said, "Captain Gordon, after Smoker has disposed of all the wolves on your range, you had better be a little careful of him in case he starts on your cowboys or any other live things that may be about your place."

He said, "That will be all right."

I watched him drive off with the dog following on a slack of his chain as if he had been a trained carriage dog.

We left Calgary shortly afterwards and I never saw Smoker again, but I did hear that the wolves in a body left Captain Gordon's range after Smoker put in an appearance.

FATHER of Many Children .....

By

Norman Macleod

Stokos, as he was familiarly known, was quite a character. At the time of my arrival at Fort Macleod, July, 1880, practically all the Bloods were camped on or near the island on which were located the police barracks and small village. Later, that same summer or fall, the site for the agency on the reserve was selected between the Belly and St. Mary rivers, and the Indians were located around or near it.

Minnestokos, meaning Father of Many Children, was then a very old man, practically blind, with one squaw nearly as old and helpless as himself, and one daughter, Susy. She was married to a deserter from the American army, named Anson Ely, from whom Minnestokos did not receive much assistance. Ely was a very big man, so large that they had not a blue minor chief's coat big enough for him and had to make one from a blue blanket. Because of these conditions he and his squaw were not moved to the reserve with the rest of the Bloods but were settled in a small house and furnished with rations there.

Shortly before I arrived, Colonel Macleod's son, Norman, now in Winnipeg, was born either on New Year's Eve or New Year's Day. On learning of the happy event Minnestokos appeared and congratulated the happy parents. He adopted Norman as his son, giving him the name Minnestokos.

After my arrival I spent most of my time around my father's office watching the Indians receiving their treaty money. My father was then Indian Agent, the first under Treaty Seven embracing the Blackfoot, Blood, Peigan, Sarcee, and Stoney tribes. One day Stokos noticed me and asked the interpreter, Oliver, who I was. On being informed he called me over and adopted me as his second son, giving me his war name. Mekopotokon (Bad Head).

I was not aware of the importance attached to this name by the Indians until visiting the reserve shortly before the arrival of the Duke of Windsor, then Prince of Wales, who was to be adopted into the Bloods. We were told by the interpreter, Joe Healy, that the name selected by the Indians was Bad Head. There was some mention of a mythical character, Golden Feathers, but as this was known only to a few of the oldest it received little support.

However, having learned from reliable sources of the consistent support to the Mounted Police during the negotiations leading up to Treaty Seven rendered by Mecasto, Red Crow, Head Chief of the Bloods, I suggest his name which was accepted and later used at the ceremony at Lethbridge.

I believe P. T. Barnum was the originator of the following statement: "You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." I think he must have imparted this truth to Stokos.

Shortly after the arrival of the Rev. John McLean, the first resident Methodist minister at Macleod, he tried to get in touch with the natives by gathering them together in a small building erected as a community church. Here he would tell them stories, principally from the Bible, naturally selecting those from which would be drawn illustrations particularly advantageous to his own views. This was in the winter so Stokos and his wife were always present as there was a comfortable fire. Gladstone, the Police Interpreter, or Oliver, of the Indian Department, was always on hand.

Two occurrences will always remain in my mind. On the first the parson took the story of Daniel in the Lion's Den—dwelt at some length on how the lions could not harm Daniel because the Lord was with him. Stokos gave careful attention to the story and after a few grunts replied, "I was over in the Judith Basin once, and some mountain lions attacked me. I had nothing but a Hudson's Bay dag (a short double edged knife), but I got away with them, and there was no Lord there to help me. No, Daniel was not much of a chief."

The second was on the coming of the Mounted Police, emphasizing how thankful the Indians should be to the Police for driving out the bold, bad whiskey traders. Stokos' reply was short and to the point: "Yes. Before the Police came there was lots of whiskey and lots of buffalo; now the buffalo are gone and the police drink all the whiskey."

One bright morning after a heavy snowfall, Stokos was seen to come out of the shack probably to give the missus a chance to get the fire going and breakfast under way. He was seen to walk around the woodpile, which appeared to have diminished in size, and noticing tracks in the fresh snow leading away, he proceeded to follow them till they led him to the door of a shack about one hundred yards from his home. After examining the shack in his short-sighted way, he shook his head as if in doubt and started back to his own house, carefully keeping off the trail he had followed so as not to obliterate the tracks. After reaching the woodpile he started out again in the old tracks, going very slowly and carefully so as to make no mistakes. As was to be expected, he, in due course, reached the door to which he had previously been led—the home of his ungrateful son-in-law, Ely, and daughter, Susy. After assuring himself there could be no mistake, he retraced his steps to his own home, sorrowfully shaking his head as if in disgust at the ungrateful pair who had so degenerated as to prey on their helpless parents.

I later found it rather hard to sustain the reputation of favorite son. I had started work in the I. G. Baker and Company store, and every day about ten or eleven o'clock the pair would appear, Stokos would be left in my care while the wife would take care of her shopping and other social duties. The first chore was to get him comfortably settled with his pipe going. We always kept a supply of cocsin—a weed used by the Indians and when dried and powdered was usually mixed with tobacco. We kept a large red stone pipe with a stem two feet long. At that time the only matches in use were the old sulphur matches, and one day I inadvertently applied the match to the pipe before the sulphur had burnt off, which brought on an outcry from Stokos. After that he used to hold my hand with the burning match near his eyes till all the sulphur had disappeared. This only resulted in my having a fresh match in my other hand ready to apply with the burning one, which always brought on a stern lecture for my unfilial conduct.

Well, peace be to his ashes! We always parted good friends. He was more of a chief than Daniel, and more than I at first gave him credit for.

A DOMINIE in the Foothills .....

By

W. Everard Edmonds

After changing cars at Dunmore Junction, Bull's Head, recalling buffalo days, had been the first stop. Darkness had fallen and I had just begun to doze when the clamorous brakeman called out "Seven Persons" in tones loud enough to rouse the fabled Seven Sleepers. Really, this would never do; I must keep awake or I should miss my station. To fortify myself in this resolve, I drew from my pocket for the hundredth time a yellow slip bearing these remarkable words: "Application for Mountain View accepted, come immediately, change at Dunmore."

Only a child of the older East who has long looked upon the West as the Garden of the Hesperides can realize what that brief message meant to me in the year of our Lord, 1896. It stood for advanture, spelled with a capital "A", for romance written in letters in red. Visions of Indians, trappers and cowboys floated before my eyes, and long-restrained, primitive desires surged

within my breast. A year's experience as a teacher in an Eastern county school had but served to whet my appetite for the golden West, and when I saw a fugitive advertisement for a teacher at Mountain View, Alberta, I replied within the hour. My star must have been in the ascendant, or western teachers scarce, for my application was accepted by wire. With this telegram as a token and pledge I had set out like the patriarch of old, not knowing exactly whither I went. And now here I was, armed with a first-class certificate and a plentiful supply of ammunition in the form of dog-eared textbooks, about to go "over the top" into the mysterious No Man's Land of my dreams.

I was roused from my reverie by the entrance of the conductor. When he came to examine my ticket, I told him it had been collected at Dunmore, and that I wished to purchase a new one to Mountain View.

"Mountain View!" he ejaculated. "There's no such station on the C.P.R. Better stay on till we get to Lethbridge! That's the end of the line, and maybe someone there can tell you. I've traveled from the Atlantic to the Pacific, but I've never heard of Mountain View."

Never heard of Mountain View! I had not imagined for a moment that it was off the railway line, but the conductor should know if anyone did, and I concluded to follow his instructions. I could keep awake no longer, and when the train arrived at its destination two hours late, I was again rudely awakened by that howling Dervish in the garb of a brakeman. Fortunately I was able to secure a room to myself at the the hotel, where I learned that Mountain View was up among the foothills of the Rockies, about seventy-five miles away. Thus comforted, I went to bed and slept soundly until morning.

Lethbridge, I learned, was an important distributing centre for freight, and the latest census gave it a population of fifteen hundred souls. It was also an important coal-mining centre, the Galt mines having been the first to open in Southern Alberta. Besides the "Turkey Trail" to Dunmore, there was another railway line running south to Great Falls, Montana. So though modern conveniences were somewhat lacking, the town was in constant touch with the outside world. The Alberta Railway and Irrigation Company had been responsible for much of this development, and at this time had a most capable manager in the person of Mr. C. A. Magrath, now more widely known.

My right-hand neighbor at breakfast was a man of somewhere between fifty and sixty, whose dry humor and shrewd observations immediately attracted my attention. The long gray beard sweeping his breast gave him a striking resemblance to one of the old Hebrew prophets, and I was not greatly astonished to hear that he was the Moses of a new immigration into the Canadian Promised Land. This patriarchal stranger was Charles Ora Card, the founder of Cardston, and the president of the Mormon Church in Canada. When he learned that I was the new teacher at Mountain View, he told me that the settlement was only fifteen miles beyond his own home, and that he would be pleased to take me to Cardston with him that day. I gladly accepted his kind offer, and we arranged to set out an hour before noon.

I took advantage of the brief respite allowed me to do some shopping and to write a long letter home. At the post office I met Mr. J. D. Higinbotham, who had settled in Lethbridge in 1885. He and his brother "Ed" opened the first drug store, and had charge of the first post office in this part of the country. Mr. Higinbotham introduced me to another old-timer who came in at that moment, a prosperous-looking rancher, who informed me that *his* brother was a noted Corish wrestler. "He wrestled before Queen Victoria one time," said he, "and the good old Queen got quite struck on him."

The business part of Lethbridge extended down one long street, with the stores facing a big, open square. I was struck by the great number of horses. Every now and then a big freight-wagon would draw up to the sidewalk, and if the driver were in no immediate hurry, he would unhitch his horses, two, four, six, or eight as the case might be, and turn them loose to graze in the square.

When I returned to the hotel, Mr. Card was tucking various parcels under the seat of his buckboard, and in a few minutes we were—to use a western phrase which immediately caught my fancy—"hitting the trail." It was a beautiful September day, the roads were good, and we bowled along merrily until two o'clock, when we stopped for lunch and a brief rest. Not a fence was to be seen anywhere, and houses were conspicuous by their absence. The prairie was treeless, slightly rolling and covered with a species of bunch grass which, my companion informed me, made it one of the finest cattle countries in the world. The snow remains but a short time in ordinary seasons, and the cattle are thus able to run out all winter. Indeed, a heavy snowfall may be carried away in a single night by a strong chinook wind.

We reached Cardston shortly after sundown, and I put up for the night at the new hotel then in course of construction and kept by "Brother" Woolf, the Bishop of the Mormon Church in this new "stake" of Zion. Cardston at this time was a pretty raw-looking town, the most important buildings being the co-operative store, and the meeting house on the hill. Most of the inhabitants were engaged in ranching, and at the hotel I met my first cowboy, a long, lanky, somewhat silent individual who was temporarily incapacitated for work by an injured wrist and a broken collar-bone.

Next morning mine host Woolf drove me out to the scene of my future labors. As I drew near my destination the country became more hilly, and I quite lost count of the number of little lakes on every side. Great herds of cattle grazed along the hillsides, and flocks of wild fowl flew restlessly from slough to slough. The mountains grew steadily larger, and as we topped a higher hill than usual I saw before me a beautiful green valley with a little mountain creek running through it like a ribbon of silver. A dozen log houses were scattered along its winding course, with a larger one at the very end. At the sight of the latter my heart gave a sudden bound; for what teacher could fail to recognize that classic style of architecture. It was the schoolhouse of Mountain View.

The life of the ordinary human being is chiefly conditioned by two prime factors, heredity and environment. In the case of the rural teacher a third element enters in, and as the time-honored custom of "boarding round" has steadily declined in popularity since the days of Ichabod Crane, it often bulks larger than the other two. I refer, of course, to the school-teacher's boarding-place. In this respect I was singularly fortunate in being able to secure comfortable quarters at the home of the largest rancher in the district. His wife had been a "school marm" once upon a time, and both did their best to make me feel thoroughly at home.

The population of this little pioneer community consisted of two distinct classes: a few well-to-do American ranchers from Montana and Idaho, and the larger number, of Mormon settlers from Utah. The latter had but lately come into the foothill country, and they were just beginning to get a start when I arrived. Between them and "the Gentiles" there was a great gulf fixed in religious matters, but in the everyday affairs of life they mingled on equal terms.

Of course there were a few who could not be placed in either of these categories. For example there was big "rocky" Belvidere who had left Missouri fifteen years back, when he found it "getting too crowded." Rocky ran a sawmill and freighted by turns, and it was really a treat to watch him drive a four-horse team. Over near the Waterton Lakes dwelt "Kootenai" Brown, duplicating Thoreau's happy hermit existence by Walden Pond. Then there was the inevitable "remittance man," the man who gets money from the Old Land, with all the virtues and vices of his class. This one was the grandson of a distinguished London surgeon, whose name will always be associated with that of a certain disease still pronounced incurable. A small sprinkling of Canadians mingled with the rest, and gallantly upheld the torch of "down-east" civilization.

The school children were like school children the world over. About forty in number, their ages ranged from six to sixteen. There was, it is true, one seventeen-year-old girl, but she should hardly be counted, as she was married before my year was up.

That was a memorable wedding. Friends came from far and near, and "there was a sound of revelry by night." The Presbyterian minister had been brought up from Cardston to tie the knot, and he arrived in the midst of a pouring rain. Nothing, however, could dampen the spirits of the good-natured crowd, and the ceremony over, the fun at supper waxed hilarious. I had been asked to toast the bride, but in the general excitement had quite forgotten my duty until during a momentary lull in the conversation, the father of the bride turned to me and said in a sepulchral whisper, "Would you like to speak now, or shall we let the young folks enjoy themselves a little longer?"

"Among those present" was a sister of the bride, a little girl of eight years old, who was my brightest pupil. This clever child found it comparatively easy to pass through three grades in six months, and her father's pride in

her ability found an echo in the ear of at least one sympathetic listener when he said, "That little girl of mine, the minute she's home from school, sits at the table with her books in front of her, a newspaper on one side and a magazie on the other—reading them all at the same time, by jinks." In a school essay on "Our Village," this precocious youngster called attention to the weeds which grew in rank profusion on the sod roofs of the houses, especially one species commonly known as "fat-hen." "In truth," she added, "this is the only kind of poultry that is eaten to any extent—and that in the form of greens—by the inhabitants of our village." Today, Isabel Patterson, the writer of that little essay, is on the staff of one of New York's leading newspapers, and two charming books bear witness to her literary ability.

The Rev. Gavin Hamilton, the Presbyterian minister at Cardston, came now and then to take a service at Mountain View. Unselfish, kindly, the very essence of good-nature, he was at the same time the most absent-minded of men. There was only one man, I think, who out-distanced him in this respect, and, strange to say, I met him first at Mr. Hamilton's own table. This was a mounted policeman, known generally as "Doc", who was stationed at that time on the St. Mary's River. One day "Doc" arrived at the detachment leading a pack horse behind his own favorite roan. He had just dismounted when he remembered that he had intended to water the steeds at the river, a good half-mile away. Remounting the roan he galloped down to the river bank, and then suddenly remembered that he should have brought along the pack horse as well. Wheeling round, he cantered back to the detachment, dismounted, and started off on foot, leading the thirsty pack horse behind him. On reaching the river once more, he discovered that he had left the roan behind . . . The sergeant in charge at the detachment, who had been an interested spectator of the whole proceeding, swore on the honor of an ex-country cricketer that "Doc" made ten good runs before his task was accomplished.

I saw a good deal of the work of the Mounted Police Force in Southern Alberta, and gleaned something of its history from Captain Deane, then in charge at Lethbridge. From the day of its organization the N.W.M.P. had been the stamping-ground of adventurous spirits drawn from all parts of the world. The members diers, but they also acted as magistrates, sheriffs, license inspec- of the force were essentially sol- tors, fire wardens, health officers and game wardens. There is no record that any officer ever died of having nothing to do. In the suppression of smuggling and illicit trade with the Indians, in the regular patrol of the settlements and reserves, and in the enforcement of quaratine regulations and game laws, there was plenty of scope for activity the whole year round.

It would be difficult to find in any corps in the world an assemblage of characters offering a greater variety than was to be met with in the ranks of the Mounted Police. On the payrolls were to be seen the names of novelists, artists, "honorables", Oxford and Cambridge graduates; sons of admirals, generals, bishops and statesmen; former officers of the militia and volunteer corps of Canada and Great Britain, as well as ex-officers of the armies of several continental countries. One would naturally expect tact and diplomacy above the average among such a body of men, and numerous incidents in the annals of the Force illustrate the ready wit of its members in dealing with the most difficult situations.

The writer recalls one of these incidents very vividly. In the fall of 1896, Charcoal, an Indian on the reserve, shot the farm instructor and escaped to the timber country at the foot of the mountains. For more than six weeks he evaded the Police, and one of the most popular members of the Force, Sergeant Wilde, was shot while attempting to capture him. At length, worn out by continuous riding and lack of food and sleep, Charcoal on a pitch-black night sought his old tepee on the reserve. Here he was recognized and taken captive, ending his life a few weeks later by the hangman's rope.

But one need not enumerate instances of this kind for, after all, the keynote of the entire history of the Force is struck in the story of the constable, a mere boy, who was sent across the prairies in the depth of winter to hunt horses in the Pend d'Oreille. He was overtaken by a blizzard, and several weeks later when the snows had melted, a search-party found his body in a small ravine. His right hand still clasped his notebook on a leaf of which he had scribbled with stiffened fingers: "Lost. Horse dead. Am trying to push on. Have done my best."

Am trying to push on—Have done my best. That is the propelling power back of all the work of the Mounted Police. *"Maintien le droit"* are the words that encircle the buffalo head on the police coat-of-arms, but sanctioned though they are by colleges of heralds and the traditions of centuries, they lack the stirring force of the dying message of the young constable who had failed, knew he had failed, and knew too, that he had done his best.

EARLY Natural History in the North West

By
Dan McCowan

In bygone days throughout what is now the Province of Alberta there was unique opportunity for the study of Natural History. Buffalo and antelope, present in prodigious numbers, were freely preyed upon by bands of wolves and by grizzly bears. The pursuit and capture of the beaver and other fur bearers formed staple industry in all parts of the country. Skies and sloughs were thronged with water-fowl and streams were well stocked with fish. Yet, save for a handful of men of scientific bent, few of the early travelers to this region were interested in the life history and habits of beasts of the prairies and woods or of fowls of the air.

Alexander Henry, the fur trader, who came to Rocky Mountain House in 1810 was naturally more concerned with the pelts of animals than with the behavior of the creatures themselves. However in intervals between tending store, caring for domestic poultry and weeding a vegetable garden, he took to the woods with a muzzle-loading musket in pursuit of game. On one hunting trip he penetrated westward through the mountains as far as Howse Pass. From his journal we learn that buffalo were then accustomed to range in summer even to the extreme source of the Saskatchewan river.

On another outing, to the country west of present day Wetaskiwin, Henry was vexed at failing to get within gunshot range of a huge grizzly but, as it turned out, this proved rather fortunate. He wrote: "The bear eluding me I returned to the boat and pushed off. Seeing a flock of outardes (geese) I attempted to shoot, but my piece would not give fire and I found she needed to be fresh charged and have the flint repaired. How happy it was for me that I did not engage the grizzly bear."

Turning to the log of another traveler who had intimate early knowledge of western Canada we find that Sir George Simpson was usually in too great a hurry to devote much time to the manners and habits of animals and birds other than those which might be used in stocking the larders of trading posts and forts. Noting the immense herds of buffalo then inhabiting the prairies and foothills of Alberta he said:

"The buffaloes are incredibly numerous. In the year 1829 I saw as many as ten thousand of their putrid carcases lying mired in a single ford of the Saskatchewan and contaminating the air for many miles around."

Commenting on this country as being one of great extremes of climate, and of plenty and scarcity of game Simpson wrote: "At some seasons both whites and natives are living in wasteful abundance on fish, flesh and fowl of all kinds while at other times they starve. In the year 1820 when wintering at Athabaska Lake our provisions fell short and on several occasions I went for three whole days and nights without a single morsel of food; but then again I was one of a party of eleven men and one woman which devoured three ducks and twenty-two geese at a sitting."

There was one native animal of whose activities all early explorers, traders, trappers and the like were obliged to take notice. The wolverine, a large and cunning weasel, a bad actor seldom caught in the act, raided food caches, robbed traps and was generally malicious. Paul Kane, a Toronto artist who lived at Fort Edmonton during the winter of 1847-48, tells of one of these animals gaining access to a store of food by squeezing itself through the narrow space between the heavy logs forming the cache. Desperately lean when it had made entry the animal speedily waxed fat on repeated meals of dried meat and thereby became a prisoner. When Kane and his guide arrived it had eaten all of their precious provisions and being unable to regain freedom was promptly shot by the irate and hungry travelers.

Dr. Cheadle who with Viscount Milton passed through Edmonton in 1863 enroute to the Cariboo gold field, makes mention in his most entertaining diary of a wolverine which took up residence in the temporarily untenanted Jasper's House during the previous summer. There was nothing edible within that remote trading post at the time, but the brute ate all the parchment which commonly took the place of glass in the windows of primitive outpost buildings.

One of the most delightful books on early days, and par-

ticularly on hunting, in western Canada is that bearing the title "Saskatchewan and the Rocky Mountains." It was written and illustrated by the Earl of Southesk, a Scots nobleman who, in the intervals between hunting and posting his diary, devoted much time to the study of Shakespeare's plays. In 1859 he ran buffalo on the plains and there also strove hard to bag a grizzly. Around camp fires in what is now Jasper National Park his half-breed guides and packers told him awesome stories about the ferocity of cougars which, at the moment might well be lurking in the dark woods beyond the firelight. Southesk was in all likelihood the first tourist to visit the Canadian Rockies and it is evident that even then the natives were fully primed to humbug the innocent traveler.

On the headwaters of Brazeau river, west of modern Nordegg, the Earl from Forfarshire had good sport among the large bands of Big Horn sheep inhabiting that area. With the Rocky Mountain goats he was not so successful, as illustrated by this extract from the record of his hunting trip:

"I had set my heart on getting some of these white goats and this looked like my last chance. I lay there on the mountain side, almost fainting with toil and very sore at heart. These animals began to seem to me like the enchanted beasts in German stories which lure men to destruction and then mock at their misery. Once I had nearly broken my neck and twice nearly broke a blood vessel in following them—and all in vain. A sort of frenzy came over me and I vowed to pursue them to the death. After further exertion I finally shot one of them but it fell over a cliff and was thereby rendered useless as a trophy.

"Sat up late reading *Much Ado About Nothing*. The *wolves* howled and the night was very cold."

THE LAST BATTLE

By
G. A. Kennedy

The following article appeared in the Lethbridge News dated April 30th, 1890. Dr. Kennedy, writer of the article 55 years ago, was North West Mounted Police physician at Fort Macleod.

It is to be noted that the nomenclature of the rivers at Lethbridge has been changed since the article was written in 1890. The river at Lethbridge now known as the Oldman River, was at that time called the Belly River.

The accompanying picture painted on buckskin tells the complete story of the battle.

It is within the knowledge of most of the residents of the Northwest, that the Indian population of the Territories is composed mainly of two great divisions—the Crees and Assiniboines forming one, and the Blackfoot Confederacy or the Blackfeet, Bloods, and Piegans the other. Speaking different languages, inhabiting different though adjoining parts of the Territories, and with different manners and customs, they have been enemies from time immemorial, and it is unquestionably due to this fact that the rebellion of 1885 was so quickly and easily put down. Had the Blackfeet forgotten their old enmity and joined hands with the Crees, it is hardly possible to calculate the enormous additional loss of life and property that would have followed, and we cannot therefore be too devoutly thankful that out of evil there came good—that an hereditary feud between the two great camps was the means of ensuring peace and safety to a large and populous part of the Northwest.

I have said that most Nor'-westers are aware of the two great divisions, and possibly of the fact that they are mutually antagonistic; but I venture to say that few of them know that, at the present site of the Galt coal mine, these two races came together in mortal combat, and fought out one of the greatest Indian battles of the past fifty years. I propose telling the story as briefly as possible because I believe the event to be worthy of record, and also of interest to the people of Canada. Additional incentives are are found in the fact that I know the ground well and have the details of the battle from an eye witness who was also a participant.

It was late in the fall of 1870. The preceding year, smallpox had swept through the tribes, and left in its wake whole camps of "dead lodges." (A "dead lodge" is, or was one of the burial customs of these Indians. When a brave died he was rolled in robes, his arms and trappings were laid beside him, along with enough food and water to last him on his journey to the Happy Hunting Grounds, and the lodge was left standing over him. These lodges were never disturbed.) The mortality was estimated by competent authorities at forty or fifty percent. The Crees and Assiniboines though this a favorable opportunity to strike a decisive blow at their powerful enemy, and accordingly organized and despatched a war party, numbering in the neighborhood of six or eight hundred braves. Big Bear, Piapot, Little Mountain, and Little Pine—names which became rather well known in '85—were among the Crees and Assiniboine Chiefs, either present themselves or represented by their bands, and they were largely reinforced by the South Assiniboines.

The Blackfeet and Bloods were then camped mainly on Belly River between Kipp and Whoop-Up, two whiskey trading posts about twenty miles apart, but the Blackfeet themselves were not numerically strong. The South Peigans were camped on the St. Mary, above Whoop-Up, which is at the junction of the Belly and St. Mary, having been driven to this side of the line by the American Expedition against them under Col. Baker. Big Leg, Black Eagle, and Heavy Shield were their chiefs. Crow Eagle led the North Peigans, and Bull Back Fat and Button Chief the Bloods. The South Peigans were well armed with repeating rifles, needle guns, and revolvers, the Bloods were not so well equipped, while the Crees and Assiniboines had only old muskets, Hudson Bay fukes, and bows and arrows to depend on.

The Crees reach Little Bow, about twenty-five miles away, and small parties from the main band, sent out to reconnoitre, succeeded in stealing horses from small camps about Whoop-Up. One night, however, about the 25th of October, the whole band set out and descended on a few lodges about three miles above Whoop-Up, on Belly River, killing a brother of Red Crow, chief of the Bloods and two or three squaws. The noise aroused the whole Blood camp, which was in the immediate vicinity, and in a few minutes their braves were engaging the enemy, while messengers were riding in hot haste to alarm the South Peigans.

Such was the commencement of probably the only purely Indian pitched battle in the Canadian Northwest, of which we have any authentic record.

The first faint streaks of dawn had hardly begun to show in the east when the Peigans came up and the fight became general; the Crees slowly retreating across the prairie toward the present site of Lethbridge (the distance between the rivers is four or five miles) and the Blackfeet following. The river banks reached, the Crees took up their position in a large coulee running up from the river and out on the prairie, while the Peigans, after much difficulty, succeeded in establishing themselves in a shorter coulee to the south. A large number of Bloods and Blackfeet were in a small coulee to the north, and on the prairie to the north and west, but they found themselves too much exposed, and during the progress of the fight, gradually worked around to the south. The Crees on the whole had much the best position. The horses, of course, were stationed in the bottom out of range.

The main fighting seemed to have been between the two coulees first described. They are parallel, from three to four hundred feet wide, and separated by a ridge varying in width from thirty to two hundred feet. Here for over four hours the battle raged, the braves crawling to the edge of the coulee and exchanging shots with the more adventurous of the enemy. A head, a hand, a piece of blanket or robe—anything was enough to shoot at. It was a contest in which skill and cunning in taking advantage of the inequalities of the ground came largely into play. It is stated that several were badly injured by heavy stones thrown across the narrowest part of the ridge from one coulee into the other. Two Peigans attempted to gallop down the ridge for purpose of ascertaining the strength and position of the enemy, one was killed outright, and the other badly wounded and his horse killed under him. In all during this time about a dozen Blackfeet were killed, and a large number wounded. It is impossible to say how many Crees were killed.

The Peigans finally got a strong force of braves behind a butte, which in a measure commanded the Cree coulee, and the fire from them and from their friends in the coulee, became hotter and hotter, until the Crees, becoming alarmed, began to effect a strategic movement to the rear by slipping out of the coulee and making for the river. At this instant, Jerry Potts, a half-breed Peigan (he afterwards became famous as a police guide), who was reconnoitering around the bank of the ridge facing the river, perceived this movement, and made a sign to his companions in the coulee to charge, and charge they did. Some on horseback, some on foot, they poured over the ridge and down the coulee, driving the now panic stricken Crees before them, and killing without quarter. A large number of the latter were forced out of the ravine over the point of a hill to the north. The descent here is some twenty or thirty feet, and almost perpendicular, and over this pursuers and pursued both rushed headlong, horses and men tumbling over each other, the men fighting and struggling for dear life, until the bank was reached and the

AS WE were Saying ....

This is the final issue of the *Alberta Folklore Quarterly* to be submitted by your present editor. We are moving to the State of Wisconsin, leaving the *Quarterly* and the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project in capable hands.

We leave Western Canada with a good deal of regret. We like the Alberta folk and are beginning to think of ourselves as Albertans. In many ways Alberta seems like home. We believe it will always be like that.

We find some comfort in knowing that Albertans have pride in recognizing their own particular way of saying and doing; and we go with a distinct consciousness of faith that they will continue to preserve their traditions.

As a parting work we might remind you—as Albertans—that the lore of the countryside is roundabout. It is not a written literature; don't expect to find it in books. You may hear it in the whisper of the Alberta wind; hear it in the beat of the rain and the hail. You may see it in the vistas of the prairies and perhaps in the great hump of the Rocky Mountains. You will certainly see it in the faces of the people and hear it on their lips. Hear the tradition, then tell it again and let it live.

In this day when all our minds are turned toward the hope of a lasting International peace, let's remember that a great and true Internationalism may be strengthened by a knowledge of our local beliefs; that we may create within ourselves a body of tradition of which we are proud, and in which the rest of the world may find something to be proud of.

* * * *

Following our custom of establishing authentic wonders as a basis for Western exaggeration we present a yarn collected from M. B. Graham, of Calgary, by Lieutenant Herbert Halpert, U.S.A.A.F.:

> When Paul Bunyan built the Rocky Mountains, it was the winter of the blue snow when the geese flew backwards. He hauled the rock from Winnipeg with a big blue ox. He had a steam shovel; everytime it took out a scoop it gouged out a hole the size of Lake Louise.
>
> They made flapjacks on a large griddle. The griddle was so large that the KP, he'd have to skate up and down the griddle with greased feet—butter his feet—to get it greased.
>
> He had an engine that was so large that everytime the wheels made one revolution it was pay day . . .*

*For the Halpert Tales see: California Folklore Quarterly, Vol. 4, No. 1, Jan. 1945.

We can't vouch for Paul's oil or steam shovel or griddle, but we can for the colored snow. George C. Ruhle, Park Naturalist, Glacier National Park, writing about a Bunyan yarn similar to the above, states:

> Among the fantastic tales woven about the Cyclopean, heroic Paul Bunyan, the story of the "winter of the Blue Snow" ranks as a favorite. On rare occasions in wintertime Glacier's east side, too, experiences an unusually tinted snowfall, a beautiful creamy-buff precipitation which melts into tawny-skinned snow masses in the sun's heat. Residents become amazed at the strange phenomenon and tell stories of wars presaged by falls of blood-red flakes; tales are recalled of the earth's "sweating blood" after a ruthless and gory battle. No permanent mystery is attached to Glacier's experience, however. A great dust storm raging in the Palouse country of the Idaho Panhandle will darken the atmosphere for hundreds of miles away. A coincident snowstorm of the front ranges of the Rockies merely sweetens the dusty atmosphere, and becomes colored itself by so doing.
>
> Wholly different from this externally colored snow is the "red snow" found at times on Glacier's summits in the summertime. Footprints across a snowbank are colored crimson; the field itself shows a light pink tinge. This coloration, like that of the famed blood-red snow fields of the Arctic, like the "red snowstorms" of tradition, like the red snow of the Cordilleras, Alps and other montane regions throughout the world, is due solely to the rapid multiplication of a microscopic, but brilliantly colored one celled alga. To the botanist this simple plant is *Protococcus nivalis* (primordial, nival coccus; freely, snow-dwelling, primitive plant), as much at home in the snow field, and quite as removed from the power of prophesying ominous events as the fiery paintbrush of the prairie or the scarlet salvia of a quaint, old fashioned garden.*

While stationed at Calgary Lt. Halpert heard some of the famous tales of the West. There is the yarn, for instance, often told to illustrate deceptive distances in Alberta. The story as given here was told to Lt. Halpert by Dr. B. J. Charles.

> This Englishman was here visiting a cousin of his, and in the morning he got up and he thought he'd like to walk from Calgary to the Rocky Mountains—they looked so close. (They're about eighty miles away.) He started at nine o'clock and landed home at five o'clock very much played out. When he told his cousin what he had done, his cousin told him: "You must never do that again because you can't judge distance here—the air is so rare."
>
> The next day they were going for a little walk together and they came to a little stream. The native Calgarian was going to step over it, but the visiting cousin took a look at it and started to take off his clothes. On being asked what he was doing, he said, "I'm not going to take a chance on stepping over. It may be a lot wider than it looks due to the rarified air."

*See: Drivers' Manual, Glacier Park Transport Co., Glacier National Park, Montana, 1937.

And certainly no less interesting than the deceptive distance of the West is this tale explaining how certain western creatures learned to hop. This one was told to Lt. Halpert by Alex. R. McTavish.

> There's a real lead in stories about the dry years in this country—in the early '80's. There's been many stories told about them. It didn't rain for so long that the ground began to crack. And these were not ordinary cracks, but they kept getting wider until the whole country was just a network of cracks leaving little islands with large crevices between. It's said that the rabbits used to walk like ordinary animals, but in order to get from one island to another they had to hop and therefore acquired the habit of hopping. Some people say that's where the grasshopper learned to hop—from jumping from one island to another. Prairie animals such as the antelope became very expert at it. In fact everything that traveled had to hop. Even the old-timers, who were very few in those days, did their share of hopping. Naturally they acquired a hopping gait too, but this gait did not stay with them after normal weather conditions sealed up the cracks. But there are some of the real old-timers from the prairie region that still have a suspicious loping gait.

* * * *

Accounts by early travelers in the West often furnish some of the best yarns. Colonel P. A. Moore, of Banff, reminds us that this is true.

"The following account," he writes, "is taken from *The North-West Passage by Land*, by Viscount Milton and W. B. Cheadle, M.D. The Narrator is Chief Trader Hardisty who related this yarn to Milton and Cheadle some time in May, 1863. This story appealed to me, especially as it is, as far as I know, the first recorded instance of athletic training in the Great North West."

The locale of this yarn was old Fort Benton, Montana, the famous trading post on the Missouri. This should make the story especially interesting to Albertans, since Fort Benton was headquarters for most of the trading into Southern Alberta before the arrival of the railroad. The Fort Benton trail is one of the great historic roads of the province.

Here's the story: "One day a solitary and adventurous Cree made his appearance at the Fort on foot. Shortly after his arrival, a body of mounted Blackfeet arrived, and discovering the presence of one of the hostile tribe, clamorously demanded that he should be given up to them to be tortured and scalped. The trader in command of the fort was anxious to save the life of the Cree, yet afraid to refuse to surrender him, for the Blackfeet were numerous and well armed, and had been admitted within the stockade. After much discussion, a compromise was agreed to, the white man engaging to keep the Cree in safe custody for a month, at the end of which time the Blackfeet were to return to the Fort, and the prisoner was to be turned loose, with a hundred yards start of his pursurers, who were bound to chase him only on foot, and with no other arms but their knives.

"The Blackfeet took their departure, and the Cree was immediately put into hard training. He was fed on fresh buffalo meat, as much as he could eat, and made to run around the Fort enclosure, at full speed, for an hour twice every day.

"At the expiration of the stipulated month, the Blackfeet came to the Fort, according to their agreement. Their horses were secured within the walls, all their arms taken from them except their knives, and then the expected victim was escorted to the starting place by the whole staff of the establishment, who turned out on horseback to see fair play.

"The Cree was placed at his post 100 yards ahead of his blood-thirsty enemies, who were eager as wolves for their prey.

The word was given, and away darted the hunted Indian, the pursuers following with frantic yells. At first the pack of Blackfeet gained rapidly, for terror seemed to paralyze the limbs of the unfortunate Cree, and his escape seemed hopeless. But as his enemies came within a few yards of him, he recovered his presence of mind, shook himself together, his training and fine condition began to tell, and, to their astonishment and chagrin, he left them with ease at every stride. In another mile he was far in advance, and pulling up for an instant, shook his fist triumphantly at his baffled pursuers, and then quickly ran out of sight!"

As far as Hardisty knows he is still going!

* * * *

A slightly different type of race that occurred at Medicine Hat and involved a famous western strong man is recounted by George Shepherd, of West Plains, Saskatchewan. The story is about Fightin' Joe Wylie and was told to Mr. Shepherd by Gabriel Lavallie, aged Metis of the Cypress Hills. This is the yarn just as Mr. Shepherd wrote it down:

"It was somewhere about 1884 that I was in Medicine Hat and first met Joe Wylie. It was on a Sunday afternoon and about the only thing to do in those days on Sunday was to get drunk, fight, or go horse racing. This Sunday there was a big crowd out on the race track, which was a flat place up on the river bank south of town. There was a big fellow up there named Ed. Rowe selling whiskey at 50 cents a cup.

"There was also a big guy up there named Jack Boudoin riding a big heavy horse with a large Mexican saddle and taperderas. And there was this big Englishman, Fightin' Joe Wylie, who must have been about six feet four inches in height, riding a large black horse that he called Nigger.

"A bunch of Frenchmen, lumberjacks from the east, had just blown into the Hat from Calgary and, as I was holding Mr. Wylie's horse at the time, they suggested that I race with Boudoin for stakes of $25 a side with Wylie to hold the stakes. They were talking among themselves in French, and saying that if they won they would get the money, and that if they lost they would take the stakes away from Mr. Wylie anyway. They asked me if I could talk French, which I could, but I told them that I could only talk a little Spanish, so they talked very freely among themselves. I told Mr. Wylie of their plans and he gave a short laugh and said, 'All right, let them try it out.'

"Well, we ran the race and I won. At this the Frenchman came running up to Joe to say that it had been a foul start and that they wanted all the money. Wylie was waiting for them and, peeling off his coat, gave it to me, telling me to start off for town on his horse and that he would follow on foot. Just then the big Frenchman, who was the leader of the gang, came running at Mr. Wylie. I did not exactly see what happened, but I saw the big Englishman sort of stick out his leg and trip and hit the Frenchman, who rolled over a couple of times and then lay very still on the grass.

"Joe was on the run by this time, following me up, and every time a Frenchman would catch up to him he would stick out his leg, hit him and leave him piled in a heap. Joe, being a professional football player, seemed to know just how to trip and hit them. He must have downed three or four of them but finally three of them caught up to him. At this Joe just turned about and faced them and all you could see was flying legs and arms and all you could hear was French cuss words and good old English oaths. But Joe downed them all and jogged along on foot into town. I never saw such a man to fight. He really seemed to enjoy it.

"The next day Mr. Wylie met me in the bar and gave me a few drinks and also the $25. Mr. Wylie's arms were black and blue where those Frenchmen had clawed the shirt sleeves off him, but the Frenchmen I saw around town later looked a whole lot worse. The last time I saw Fightin' Joe Wylie, just before he died, he was pretty ill and said, 'Well, Gabe, I don't suppose we'll ever run horses at Medicine Hat again.' "*

*See: Regina Leader, Regina, Saskatchewan.

* * * *

Lawyers and judges usually furnish their share of good humor, and we have been impressed by the innumerable tales about the famous Calgary lawyer, Paddy Nolan. Mr. J. D. Higinbotham, once of Lethbridge, and author of the highly readable Alberta book, *When the West Was Young*, sends us a good Nolan story.

"Once upon a time a lady from Medicine Hat was committed for trial charged with selling lottery tickets. She was raffling a piano, and sold tickets at one dollar each. Since Paddy Nolan was known throughout the West as a valiant defender, the lady went to Calgary to secure his legal services. Paddy asked her if she had any of the 'pasteboards' left, to which she replied, 'Yes.' He then described to her the situation of a large stone building on 7th Avenue West (the Court House), and said, 'You go in and take the second door to the left and you will find a kindly old gentleman there who will buy a ticket.'

"She went as directed, found the kindly old gentleman—none other than Mr. Justice Scott—and, being a personable and comely woman, made a sale.

"On the eve of the trial, Paddy and Judge Scott were on the same train enroute to Medicine Hat. Paddy twitted the judge about taking part in illegal raffles. When the case was called Paddy pleaded guilty for his client, then addressed the court in her behalf: 'It is a well known principle of law that an accomplice is guilty the same as the principal. The person who buys a raffle ticket is equally culpable with the person who sells. Is there any reason why one should be punished, and the other allowed to go Scott free?' The judge's upper lip was twitching during the eloquent and impassioned speech. He gave a hasty 'Sentence suspended' and, evidently, gave deep thought to what he would say to Paddy afterwards."

Paddy Nolan was born in Limerick, south Ireland, St. Patrick's Day, 1864. He was christened "Patrick James" but was usually known as "Paddy". He died February 11, 1913, in his 49th year.

* * * *

Alberta has had its share of interesting and amusing rascals. We recall with pleasure the tales about Dave Cochrane, the master trickster of Southern Alberta, and those about Jack Dubois, the Robin Hood of the Stettler country. We have been interested, too, in discovering yarns about the foremost trickster and humorist of the Peace River Country, Baldy Red.

We asked Norman Soars, of Peace River, to send down a few good Baldy Red tales. Here's what Mr. Soars replied:

"One remembers Baldy best for his sense of humor. He dearly loved to joke and it didn't matter much whether the joke was on him or on his old enemies, the Police.

"A typical story is told of Baldy in Peace River. Major 'Blackjack' Macdonell was police officer and Justice of the Peace. One day Baldy called in at the Hudson's Bay Store and suggested to the Manager, Johnny Sutherland, that he might lend him two hundred dollars. 'I've got to meet the Major this afternoon and he's apt to soak me a couple of hundred,' Baldy explained. Johnny who was (and still is) a canny Scotchman, knew Baldy of old and said that he thought he could manage it, but when would he be paid? 'On the first of June,' Baldy said, and when he said the first of June, he meant just that—neither sooner nor later.

"That afternoon Baldy sat fidgeting in the guard room at the barracks. Presently Major Macdonell came in and, taking off his coat, remarked, 'Well, Baldy, what brought you here?'

" 'Two policemen, Major,' said Baldy.

" 'Huh, drunk, I suppose?' said the Major.

" 'Yes, both of them,' replied Baldy.

"Needless to say he needed the two hundred and repaid the loan on the due date.

"Another story Baldy liked to tell was of the time he pulled up with his load of moonshine in front of the Police Barracks and, walking boldly in, asked the N.C.O. in charge to keep an eye on his wagon overnight. 'I've a load of government stuff—dynamite and caps and all, and there're so many damn crooks in the country, I daren't leave it.' So the police watched his load of bootleg liquor all night and Baldy had a new story to tell of his prowess.

"Or, that's the story Baldy told!

"Another time, driving into Peace River, he camped overnight at Crooked Bridge. Noticing some clipped straws on the ground, Baldy searched around until he found a cache of whiskey under the creek bank. That was fine, but the cream of the joke for Baldy was when, having washed the labels off, he sold the liquor in Peace River to the very bootlegger who had hidden it there. Baldy was proud of his reputation as a bootlegger and humorist, and of his varied exploits.

"He told me once that he went overseas in the First World War. 'Yes,' he said, 'I went over with a shipload of horses and got up to London. And, by God, when I walked down Piccadilly, every second man on the street hollered out, "Hey, Baldy, how the hell did you get over here!" '

"The story has often been told of how, when Baldy was charged with stealing a cow, he maintained that all he knew about it was that he saw a piece of rope lying in the road and threw it into the back of his wagon. 'How was I to know that there was a cow at the end of it?' Baldy would

say.

"Another exploit that Baldy liked to tell about was when, at Grouard, a fox buyer rented a stall from him in his barn to keep a pair of live silver foxes. The foxes dug their way out, but Baldy was not responsible for that. Later when, as semi-domesticated foxes will, they returned to their quarters, Baldy shut off their escape route, and, after a decent interval, sold them to their former owner.

"But Baldy never enjoyed any greater joke than when he slid a case of whiskey under the voluminous skirts of the two Grey Nuns, riding in the spring-seat of his wagon as he drove up the Grand Trunk line.

"Baldy's right name was George Yeoman—he came west from his home in Ontario as a boy, and spent most of his life freighting, first in southern Alberta, later on the Grank Trunk and later still, in the Peace River Country. He died a few years ago at Hythe, west of Grande Prairie—honestly lamented by all who knew him (except perhaps a few of his victims). He got his name from the fringe of sandy hair around his bald head. He and his old antagonists, the Mounted Police of the old days, are gone, and we will never see their like again."

Another type of trickster is the mischievous spirit of the Northern Indians known as Wah-Sak-O-Jak. This spirit is able to assume the shape of any or all the animals. This gift, of course, makes him a master prankster.

One time Wah-Sak-O-Jak was out hunting with Muskwa, the bear. They had been hunting for days and so unsuccessfully that they were beginning to eye each other suspiciously. Finally Wah-Sak-O-Jah began to rub the juice of wild cranberries into his eyes. He explained to the bear that the juice made his eyes bright and keen. The bear tried it and was temporarily blinded; whereupon Wah-Sak-O-Jak grabbed his tomahawk, whacked him over the head, skinned and ate him.

When Wah-Sak-O-Jak had finished his meal his stomach was greatly distended, so he went to a birch treet that was growing with a double trunk. He squeezed in between the two trunks and commanded the tree to close up and press his stomach back to normal. The tree, however, closed so tightly that Wah-Sak-O-Jak was held prisoner until he grew so thin that he was able to squeeze out.

Wah-Sak-O-Jak was terribly angry. He went and got a long switch and gave that tree a vicious beating. You can still see the marks of the beating on the trunk of any birch tree.

* * * *

We are fond of saying that Bob Edwards did more to establish the folklore of the West than any other person. Bob, in his own way, was quite a collector. As proof we offer the following wonderful tall story attributed by Bob to the Alberta master story spinner, Dave McDougall. This tale was published in the *Eye Opener*.

"Did you ever hear?" began Dave McDougall, the Calgary old-timer, "about the winter I put in on my ranch near Morley in 67? It was what a man might be excused for calling some winter. That is to say, it was cold.

"We began to notice unusual symptoms along in November. To begin with, the creeks all froze solid-clear to the bottom, you understand, and instead of water flowing along in the creek beds there was ice moving along at about the same speed. Regular glaciers.

"The creeks where I was emptied into the Bow and of course the Bow was as full as the creeks. So there was nothing else for the creek to do but to hump up when it reached the river and double back on itself. Then when it got to headquarters it had to double up again and go down to the river.

"All the creeks kept up this process until they were piled up on top of themselves four or five times or even more than that. Calgary folks looking west thought that the mountains were walking into town. They did, for a fact! We had to tunnel through those creeks to get from one place to another. And we had to keep making new tunnels too, as the old tunnels kept moving up above our reach, where we couldn't get at them. You never saw anything like it, believe me!

"But the worse was yet to come. Then we had the usual January thaw. But this thaw hadn't got good and started when a big freeze set in one night and froze the ground so quick and so hard that it popped the rabbits and gophers out of their holes, the way a little boy might pop peas out of the pod. I tell you it was a corker!"

* * * *

With this issue we present one of the foremost Alberta old-timers, Norman Macleod, of Lethbridge. Norman came to old Fort Macleod in 1880 and is thereby well qualified to relate early happenings in and around that historic spot. Incidentally, he has been one of the staunchest friends of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project, writing us numerous letters relating to the history and romance of Southern Alberta. Last year he won our old-timer's contest by sending in a remarkable set of reminescences.

We also take pleasure in submitting an article by another old-timer, Mr. Z. M. Hamilton, known far and wide across the West as Zack. Among his other exploits, Zack Hamilton edited the *Calgary Herald* in 1901, about the time that Bob Edwards, Paddy Nolan, and R. B. Bennett were all taking a hand in the writing. At present Zack is Secretary of the Saskatchewan Historical Society and has done a splendid collecting job for that Province.

Dan McCowan, of Banff, widely known naturalist and wild life authority, writes about early natural history in the North West. The article demonstrates that Dan knows his Western Canadiana.

This issue presents too, W. Everard Edmonds, member of our Editorial Board, local historian, parson, and teacher. He has written a great deal about the West, and one of his most recent pieces of writing is an interesting booklet called: *Edmonton Past and Present*.

Finally we note C. Frank Steele, City Editor of the *Lethbridge Herald*, author of many magazine articles, and an interested historian of Southern Alberta.

THE Hounds of Calgary

By Z. M. Hamilton

In 1901, when I was very young, probably for my sins I was editing the *Herald* in Calgary. The *Herald* was then the only daily between Winnipeg and Vancouver, and believe me I was puffed up with my own importance.

Calgary, at that time, was the ranching metropolis of Western Canada and it was such a place as now only can be seen upon the picture screen. The wooden sidewalks still rang to the belled spurs of the range riders, and most people went about their occasions on horseback. The Indians to be seen on the streets were the tall and independent Blackfeet, who, in the old days, were considered the aristocrats of the native people. The place was an important detachment of the North West Mounted Police and some of the officers and men who had made history in the old days sojourned there.

The *Herald* office was situated close to the Bank of Montreal, just across Eighth Avenue, or "Stephen Avenue" as it was then called, from the Alberta Hotel which had the reputation of providing the best entertainment for travellers in all the wide and windy West. The Alberta was a great gathering place for the worthies of the region, and in an afternoon those who gathered in the rotunda often included among their numbers some remarkable and picturesque characters.

They were fine forthright people, most of them with the weather of the prairie winds and the tan of the prairie sun upon their faces, and with many a stalwart leg bowed by the saddle. A book could be written about these men, many of whom were making Western history and my pen lingers about the subject. However, I started to tell a story about a dog that made local history of a sort in Calgary and I must leave these Alberta worthies for another chapter.

At that time, my wife and I had "hung our crane" in a comfortable little house built for us by Thomas Underwood on a side street off First Street West on the way to the Roman Catholic Church.

On New Year's Day, 1902, a messenger arrived at our domicile in great haste bearing a note from Bob Edwards. It intimated that he was lying seriously ill at "Irish's", a well-known hostelry at the outskirts of Calgary down by the Elbow River, and that he would like to see me forthwith either to help him in drawing his will or to receive his benediction, e'er he left this distressful vale of tears. I lost no time in obeying the summons because Bob was not only an old friend but I had known his people in Scotland.

When I arrived at Irish's I found Bob very much alive—as a matter of fact I had never seen him look better. He was engaged in promoting horse races among a bunch of Blackfoot Indians, and a rifle shooting match among some Calgary sportsmen. I expressed my delight at seeing him looking so well and asked him the reason of his note. He said, with an airy sweep of his

hand, "I thought it would fix things with the wife so that you could get away."

My attention was attracted by an immense hound that was stalking in a dignified manner at the heels of one of the contestants in the rifle match. He was a great tawny brute built for speed and battle and, when I attempted to stroke him, he curled back his lips from his teeth and uttered a low and menacing growl.

If I remember correctly his owner had put him up as a prize for the rifle match and I wondered why he had been willing to part with such a splendid-looking brute. I learned afterwards that the dog was pretty nearly a pure-bred Irish Wolfhound, a descendent of that ferocious breed that was imported from Hibernia to the amphitheatre at Rome to contend with lions and tigers and the other wild beasts used for a Roman spectacle. His name was "Smoker" and from my subsequent experience with him, I was very sorry fo rthe lions and other things with which his ancestors did battle.

Anyway I won him in the match and when his owner transferred the least to my hands, he said, "Treat him rightly and he will be a good friend to you."

When I led him into the house that evening, my wife said, "Good Heavens, where did you get that awful-looking brute?"

I explained that he was a dog of mettle and a splendid watch dog, and we would have lots of fun hunting wolves and coyotes with him. We gave him supper and he seemed quite friendly. Later we made a bed for him in the shed.

The following day we took him out for a walk. He stuck quite close to our heels and behaved very well, but I noticed that every dog we met, when they caught sight of him, slunk away as if terrified of their lives.

There was a young lady staying with us at the time, a friend of my wife, who was convalescing from rather a serious illness. Two or three days later my wife was preparing her breakfast to serve to her in bed. She had placed bacon and eggs and other things on a tray on the table and, on leaving the dining room for a moment, came back to find Smoker consuming with gusto the breakfast she had prepared for the invalid. He was so tall that he stood almost level with the table. She was so irritated that she gave him a couple of hard slaps with her hand and spoke to him harshly. She declared that he carefully used the table cloth to wipe from his mouth the remains of the eggs and then baring his teeth, seized her by the ankle. He did not attempt to bite her, but just held her there. She disengaged herself and ushered him into the shed where she kept him locked up until my return. I told her that he was probably just playful, but she said he had anything but a playful look.

However, he seemed to have entirely regained his good humor, and the following day when I came home my wife was getting dinner ready. She went into the pantry and discovered Smoker standing beside a shelf and polishing off the cold roast that was to provide our meal. I walked into the pantry and bestowed a good hard kick on his posterior. He turned on me and gave the fiercest growl I ever heard and attempted to seize my leg. I felt it was now or never if I were to maintain my supremacy in my own household. I had a Boer sjambok mode of rhinoceros hide and loaded with lead. I picked it up and hit him one blow with it. He reared up on his hind legs and tried to seize it from my hands. I opened the door to the shed and propelled him in that direction. When his head was through, I shut the door so that he could not turn on me again and administered to his rear quarters a proper beating. Then I relaxed the pressure and propelled him through. The row he made was something sinful during this brief scuffle. It sounded like a pit full of wild beasts. Strange to relate when I ventured to open the door to go into his lair he seemed to have recovered his good humor, and actually came forward to lick my hand.

After that he became quite devoted to us and whatever he might do to outsiders, was as gentle as a lamb with my wife and myself. If I were late at a Council meeting, or anything else that I had to attend in a reportorial capacity, my wife would go to bed and the great dog would lie down on the floor beside her. If it were late, and he could hear footsteps coming up the sidewalk, he would raise his head and listen attentively. If the footsteps left the main sidewalk and come in the direction of the house, he would rise up and go to the front door and place his nose close to it with the hackles rising on his neck and omitting low and menacing growls. When the footsteps passed he would return and take up his position by my wife's bedside. He apparently distinguished my footsteps, for when he heard them in the distance, he would smile in a canine manner and thump the floor with his tail.

For a while "all was quiet on the western front" and Smoker was quite a well-behaved member of our household. My wife had been sick and after a short sojourn at the Holy Cross Hospital returned home, and Smoker seemed delighted to see her. It was a day in early Spring—still slushy underfoot. The sun was getting strong. My wife and I were sitting on the veranda with Smoker lying beside us. A rancher with a sturdy team and a buckboard, apparently on his way out of town, turned down our street. Right opposite our door his horses shied at a piece of paper and the driver applied the whip to them. This seemed to infuriate Smoker, for he rose to his feet with the easy co-ordination of a cat and with one single bound from the veranda cleared the front fence and in a series of galloping motions approached the vehicle. The driver occupied with his horses, a team of spirited young animals, did not observe Smoker until he made an attempt to board the buckboard. The man cut at him with his whip, but little things like that did not dismay our dog. He made a leap for the driver but missed him and then turned his attention to the vehicle. He seized the hind wheel in his powerful teeth and actually stopped it from turning. I was out after him as fast as I could, seized him by the collar, and managed to drag him away.

The rancher enquired what the "so and so" I meant by harboring such a dangerous wild beast around the premises and eventually drove off cursing deeply.

I knew too much to beat Smoker myself, but again I banished him to the shed.

That Spring Smoker had an adventure that was regarded as an epic among Calgary Sportsmen. John R. Thompson, a very dignified elderly gentleman, known to everyone as "wall-eyed" Thompson owing to the loss of one of his optics, was the Dominion Homestead Inspector at the time and, in the course of his duties, had to traverse a large portion of Southern Alberta in a buggy behind a team of excellent horses. He was quite a horse and dog man himself and owned some very fancy Hackneys of the strain of the famous Robin Adair. Wherever he went he was followed by a pack of graceful greyhounds that were the most inoffensive animals in the world.

At the time of which I speak, he had recently imported a handsome greyhound bitch, and he intended to take her with him on his next trip to accustom her to the prairie sights and sounds. It occurred to him that the greyhound, green as she was in the country, might get into some trouble with wolves or coyotes, and he asked me if I would loan him Smoker to be a sort of guard for her, putting up the argument that in any case a long journey across the prairie might work off some of my pet's superfluous energy.

Thompson was an experienced dog man and Smoker took to him at once, so I allowed him to take the dog with him on the journey. He was going to Cardston, the Mormon settlement in the south country, and when he was crossing the Blood Reserve he sighted a big buffalo wolf not far from the Cutbanks. The greyhound saw it and, stretching away at a fast and graceful gallop, started in its direction. Smoker who was slouching along the trail hunting an occasional gopher had neither noticed the wolf nor the departure of the greyhound.

Thompson figured that was the end of his dog when he saw her disappear from sight over the ridge, but called to Smoker he turned his horses out on the prairie and put the whip to them. As they topped the ridge, Smoker saw the greyhound and the wolf rapidly approaching each other. He took up the chase in a most business-like manner and they all disappeared among the hills.

When Thompson eventually reached the scene the first thing he saw was the body of the greyhound completely dead. A few paces farther on, he found the wolf dead and Smoker rolling himself in a little patch of snow that had remained over from winter and getting the wolf's fur out of his teeth. This was supposed to be the only authentic instance in Alberta of one dog single-handed killing a big buffalo wolf. That was how Thompson told the story anyway and he had the evidence of the dead greyhound and the undamaged Smoker to bear out the story. His idea was that Smoker had arrived at the scene when the wolf was tangling with the greyhound, and Smoker had just killed him out of hand.

After her sojourn in the hospital my wife was long in recovering and she needed some help in the house. Female help was